

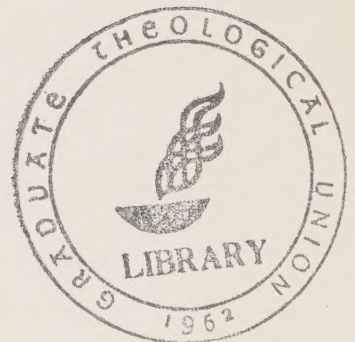
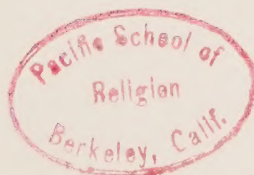


T H E S E S

1 9 3 1

Volume VI

PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION
Berkeley, California



REVISED

1881

Volume IV

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025 with funding from
Graduate Theological Union

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
LIBRARY

THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION
OF THE SEMITIC ALPHABETS

ABRAM SETSUZOH KOTSUJI

Meiji Gakuin College, 1919

Meiji Gakuin Theological Seminary, 1923

Auburn Theological Seminary

B.D., Pacific School of Religion, 1930

THESIS

Submitted in the Department of

The Old Testament Literature

and Semitic Languages

In partial fulfilment of the

Requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Theology

In the Pacific School of Religion

1931

PREFACE

It is from the days of Plato that various explanations and theories as to the origin of the Semitic alphabets have been given from different angles by a number of competent scholars. Sometimes, the problem was broached by chance, but more recently, the mystery has been assailed from the east and the south, and yet it has not yielded. The weird Sinai inscriptions, from the Mount of God in 1906, and the unknown cuneiform inscriptions, from Ras Shamra in 1928, have been deciphered; but still they are not intelligible. Like the knight on a white swan the alphabet was sent from the kingdom of mystery, on vessels of papyrus and sarcophagi, to all the inhabitants in the land of Canaan and even of the world. Whether it was derived from "the land of the rustling of wings," which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, or from the dawning east of the Great Sea, where the venturing fleets of Tarshish suffered, to us is a mystery and is hidden far beyond the clouds and the waves. When the queen of Sheba visited a clever king, she was arrested by the wisdom of Solomon, and she failed to reveal her mystery.

Isaiah was commanded by Yahweh to write on a great tablet with the pen of a man, "Maher-shalal-hash-baz." The handy pen of a man! Surely such is the alphabet.

The study of the evolution of the alphabets belongs to the palaeographical branch of philology; the search for the origin of the Semitic alphabets is greatly concerned with archaeology as well as philology. Archaeology and philology must work hand in hand to attain perfection. In the first part of this treatise, the matter has chiefly been dwelt upon from the angle of archaeology, and in the second, it is more narrowed into palaeographical observations and comparisons.

In treating the problem the writer owes much to a number of contributions by the most competent recent scholars in the line of this sort of study, of America, England, Germany, and France. Being a Japanese student fated to acquire as many Chinese characters as he could along with the Japanese syllabary, the point of view may sometimes differ from those of Europeans. We, the people of the Far East especially, are keen in our appreciation of palaeography. The writer is led to believe that he can contribute more to the world

in this line of study if only opportunity favors; he will be more than rewarded if perchance this paper might serve as an introduction to his future undertakings.

Thanks, first of all, are expressed to Dr. William Frederic Badè, not only for his throwing open his precious library for the writer, but also for his patient and inspiring instruction for the past two years in the Pacific School of Religion. Can a student be justified in giving assurance that he intends to be faithful to his noble teacher hereafter as before?

Thanks are also expressed to Miss Sumile Morishita for her offering the busiest part of her life in reading the proof of this paper: a friend in need is a friend indeed.

Pacific School of Religion,
Berkeley, California,

March, 1931.

Abram Setsuzoh Kotsuji

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	Page
GENERAL INTRODUCTION	1
INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM	2
PART. I	
HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEARCH FOR THE ORIGIN OF THE SEMITIC ALPHABETS	
I. CYPRIOTE-CRETAN HYPOTHESIS	12
A. The Cypriote and Cretan Scripts	
(1) Cypriote script	12
- Examples of decipherment -	17
(2) Cretan script	22
B. "The Cretan Origin" by A.J. Evans	31
C. The Weakness of the Cretan Hypothesis	35
- cf. Korean and Japanese -	37
D. The analytical criticism of Evans' Theory	39
- <i>linguistic, historical, and archaeological</i> -	
(1) Philistine problem:	40
The Cretan origin of the Philistines	41
A plea for 'the Philistine influence'	43
Semitization of the Philistines	45
(2) Early Phoenician inscriptions:	47
Inscriptions of Ahiram, Abiba'al, Eliba'al	49

	v
(3) The Ahiram inscription	Page
a. The circumstances of discovery	60
b. Affirmation of the date	65
c. Queries as to the date of the inscription	67
d. Palaeographical affirmation	68
(4) Biblical sources:	68
A boy of Succoth	69
Kirjath-Sepher	69
The Song of Deborah	69
(5) The alphabet of Ras Shamra:	70
Date of the new writing	71
The cuneiform alphabet	"
The environment of the invention	77
Doublings of consonantal sounds	80
Summary	82

II. BABYLONIAN-ASSYRIAN HYPOTHESIS 85

- Deecke - Delitzsch - Zimmern - Hommel -

III. EGYPTO-SINAITIC HYPOTHESIS:

SINAI-ALPHABET

1. The Rise of the Problem 92

	Page
2. Date of the Inscriptions	101
3. The Origin of the Sinaitic Alphabet	111
(1) Priority of the Egyptian alphabet	114
(2) Formal resemblance between the two scripts	118
(3) The Egyptian method of writing	"
4. The Diffusion of the Proto-Semitic Alphabet:	120
The dates of inscriptions	121
Papyrus in the 12th century B.C.	122
The presumption of the priority of the Northern group	123
The difficulties in the search	126
5. Identification of the Signs on the Basis of Canaanitic nouns	127

PART. II

PALAEOGRAPHICAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN BRANCHES OF THE SEMITIC ALPHABET

I. CLASSIFICATION OF THE SEMITIC ALPHABETS	148
II. THE QUESTION OF PALAEOGRAPHICAL SENIORITY AS BETWEEN THE N. AND S. BRANCHES	149
III. PALAEOGRAPHICAL DOUBT ABOUT THE PHOENICIAN ALPHABET	159

IV. THE SEMITIC ALPHABETS COMPARED ON THE	
BASIS OF EVOLUTIONARY EVIDENCE	159
A. NORTH SEMITIC ALPHABETS COMPARED	
a. Old Phoenician and Zenjirli(Aramaic)	161
b. Middle Phoenician and Punic	166
c. Old Aramaic(Zenjirli,etc.)	173
d. Palmyrene and Syriac	174
e. Nabataean and Arabic	184
f. Old Hebrew,Samaritan and Square-Hebrew	194
V. TRACES OF THE JOURNEY	199
CONCLUSION	204
BIBLIOGRAPHY	207

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure	Page
1 Cypriote Syllabary	17
2 ibid.: Example of decipherment	17
3 " " " "	18
4 " " " "	19
5 " " " "	"
6 Face of four-sided seal found in Crete, engraved with pictographs	25
7 Four-sided seal in red carnelion from Crete, engraved with pictographs and hieroglyphs	26
8 Three-sided carnelion seal engraved with various Cretan pictographs and symbols	27
9 Examples of Cretan linear script, Class A	28
10 Geometric linear script from Knossos	29
11 Inscribed whorl from Crete, with pre-Phoenician characters	30
12 Phoenician, & etc., letters of uncertain meaning compared with Minoan signs	31
13 Phoenician, & etc., letters with names of ascertained meaning, compared with Minoan signs	33

Figure	Page
14 Comparison of primitive signs	37
15 Comparison of Japanese and Korean characters	38
16 Japanese and Chinese characters	"
17 Inscription on the sarcophagus of Ahiram	51
18 Graffito in the tomb of Ahiram	56
19 The Ahiramic alphabet compared with other types	61
20 Hieratic and Phoenician alphabet (de Rouge)	90
21 Hieroglyphs and Old Semitic (Halévy)	91
22 a. Sinai inscriptions	93
b. " "	94
c. " "	95
23 The Ahiram, Mesha, and Siloam inscriptions	109
24 Sinaitic alphabet	129
25 South Semitic alphabets	152
26 Old Phoenician and Old Aramaic	160
27 Middle Phoenician and Punic	169
28 Zenjirli and Nerab	172
29 Grave-inscription of Queen Saddam	176
30 Palmyrene grave-inscription from Italy	177
31 Palmyrene, Old Syriac, and Estrangelo	178

Figure	Page
32 Nestorian, Jacobite, and Malkite uncial	183
33 Nabataean inscription of Hamrat, from Hauran	186
34 Sinaitic Nabataean	"

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

HOWEVER far we go into the past we find man representing objects, ideas, and words by signs. Even during the time of the Neolithic races, the so-called Reindeer Period, figures with a conventionalized meaning and mysterious lines are already painted or incised on the walls of caves and on implements of horn, bone, or a mammoth-tusk. When man is found having a writing system such as Egyptian hieroglyphs, Sumerian and Babylonian cuneiforms, and Chinese characters, it is an indication that he has already attained a much higher degree of development.

Looking back from the most highly developed system of the alphabet, there are four forms of writing, namely, pictography, ideography, syllabary, and alphabet. In the foregoing two systems, the characters bear an essential relationship to what they are intended to represent. Such methods constitute, generally speaking, an earlier stage in the development of writing than syllabary and alphabet, which have passed into the conventionalized stage. Six different peoples in various parts of the

world developed a system of writing usually known as transitional, but added symbols of a purely phonetic value, and made use of the two side by side. These peoples whose script was of this nature were the Sumerians and Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Hittites, the Chinese, and in America the Mayas and Aztecs. Gradually picture writing became conventionalized. The modification meant a distinct gain of ease in communicating idea. It was in this way that the Egyptian hieratic and demotic scripts came into existence, although so strong was the habit of writing hieroglyphs that for many centuries both were employed side by side, the hieroglyphs sometimes actually following the phonetic symbol in order, as it were, that the meaning might be doubly assured. Ancient Cyprians, Ethiopians, and Japanese had developed a syllabic system of writing of their own. The sign of a syllabary generally represents compound syllabic sounds, both the consonant and the vowel being inseparable. Comparing the syllabary and the alphabet, the latter is found a more highly-developed form of writing than the former. Why one nation happened to develop a syllabary and the other

an alphabet is hard to tell at once. It may have been the case that to some peoples the development of a syllabary seemed to come more easily than that of an alphabet. As a system, however, the easiness and applicability of the alphabet gives a value superior to any other systems.

There are three great contributions which have been offered to the world by the ancient Semites; these are the Bible, the Koran, and the alphabet. Phoenicians were often associated with the last one, though to-day they are no longer accredited with its invention. But it is most probable, as tradition suggests, that the Phoenicians, being the most adventurous sea-faring people of the ancient world, did serve in spreading about the use of the alphabet. In going from place to place their name became associated with it; hence the term 'Phoenician alphabet.' Whence, however, was it derived, and how was it developed into totally different types and kinds? Now, let us start exploring the secrets of this interesting field.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

The most alluring mystery in the study of the Semitic alphabet is hidden in the enigma of its origin where it was born and bred. A vast number of theories and opinions have been given ever since the time of Plato. Therefore, a short sketch of the history of various theories will be most pertinent as an introduction to our search.

1. Phoenician origin

Most of the classical writers are unanimous in ascribing the origin of the Semitic alphabet to Phoenicia. Among them the testimony of the following authors may be mentioned —

Lucan:¹

*Phoenices primi, famae si creditur, ausi
mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.*

Plinius:²

*Ipsa gens Phoenicum in magna gloria
litterarum inventionis.*

1. Pharsal. III, 220 - 1.

2. Historiae Naturalis, V. 12, 13.

Clemens Alexandrinus: ¹

Φοίνικας καὶ Σύρους γράμματα ἐπινοῆσαι πρῶτους

2. Egyptian origin

In ancient times several scholars such as Plato,² Diodorus,³ Plutarch,⁴ and Tacitus⁵ are, however, found to have affirmed the Egyptian origin, among whom the last one is well known by the following statement:

*Primi per figuras animalium Aegyptii
sensus mentis effigiebant — ea anti-
quissima monumenta memoriae humanae
impressa saxi cernuntur — et
litterarum semet inventores perhibent.
Inde Phoenicas, quia mari praepollebant,
intulisse Graeciae gloriamque adeptos,
tanquam repererint, quae acceperant.*

1. Stromateis (Στρωματεῖς), I. 16, 75.

2. Phaedrus 59.

3. Bibliotheca Historica (Βιβλιοθήκη Ἱστορικὴ), I, 69.

4. Quaest. conviv. IX, 3.

5. Annals XI, 14.

The earliest of the most recent theories with which we are mostly concerned is the view of Lenormant¹ (1802-1859), later published with more elaboration by de Rouge in 1874,² concerning the derivation of the alphabet from Egyptian hieratic writing. Over against this view J. Halévy³ published his theory of hieroglyphic origin, in which he thought ~~that~~ he was able to trace half of the signs in the Phoenician alphabet to the Egyptian hieroglyphs. However he was unable to find connections for the rest since they were found to be greatly modified. No new progress in the discussion was made until the Sinai inscriptions were discovered by Flinders Petrie, in 1905, at Serâbît el-Khadîm in the Sinaitic peninsula. There have more recently been discussed by competent scholars such as Bruston(1911), Gardiner(1916), Sethe(1916 and 1926), Bauer(1918), Grimme(1923 and 1926), Völter(1924), Cowley(1929), and Butin(1928).

3. The cuneiform origin

Other scholars attempted to connect the Phoenician alphabet with the cuneiform:

1. Essai sur la propagation de l'alphabet phenicien, I, p. 85ff.
2. Memoire sur l'origine egyptienne de l'alphabet phenicien, 1874.
3. Mélanges d'épigraphie et d'archéologie Semitiques, 1874, p. 168ff.; Revue Semitique 9(1901) p. 856ff., et al.

formerly Saalschütz,¹ with the Babylonian cuneiform, and later Deecke,² with the neo-Assyrian cuneiform. The weakness of the latter is that the cuneiform characters he uses for comparison had been derived from various epochs. More recently, Peiser³ resuscitated the old-Babylonian origin, postulating a mutation of the original forms. But the charge of arbitrariness can justly be made against this affirmation. All scholars, curious to say, are in this respect given to bold fancies. F. Hommel cannot be accepted without reservations since he attempted to derive the Semitic alphabet from the Sumerian picture signs.⁴ Friedrich Delitzsch combined the Egyptian and Babylonian theories. The inventor of the Semitic alphabet, according to him, acquired the principles of acrophony from Egypt, while some forms were obtained and developed under the influence of the Babylonian rectilinear signs.⁵

1. Zur Geschichte der Buchstabenschrift, 1838.

2. Der Ursprung des altsemitischen Alphabets aus der neuassyrischen Keilschrift, ZDMG, p. 102-116; cf. Plinius: Hist. Nat. I, 412.

3. In den Mitt. der Vorderasiat. G^sellsch. V, 2 (1900).

4. Grundriss der Geographie des alten Orients, I, 1904, p. 96ff.; rev. in 1925.

5. Die Entstehung des ältesten Schriftsystems, 1897; ein Nachwort, 1898; Proceed. of the Soc. of Bibl. Arch. 15, 1898, p. 392ff.

Over against all sorts of Babylonian theories, Lidzbarski¹ sought the derivation in Canaan.

4. Aegean origin

In 1906 Praetorius² pointed out the morphological resemblance between the Phoenician alphabet and the Cypriote syllabary, and the Cypriote origin of the former was assumed. On the other hand, Lehmann-Haupt³ emphasized the Phoenician origin of the Cypriote script, since the oldest Cypriote signs come only after the 6th century B.C.

The Cretan origin of the Phoenician alphabet was affirmed by Sir A.J.Evans,⁴ who in his 'Scripta Minoa', develops the theory that the alphabet was taken over from Crete to Palestine by the Philistines in the 13th century B.C. and was borrowed from them by the Phoenicians. This view was carried to extreme by Herman Schneider⁵ who pointed out abundant coincidences even between seemingly different signs.

1. Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik I, 128ff.
2. Ueber den Ursprung des kanaan. Alphabets, Berlin, 1906.
3. Zur Herkunft des Alphabets, ZDMG 73, S. 67, 1919.
4. Scripta Minoa I, 1909, p. 77ff.
5. Der Kretische Ursprung des "Phoenikischen" Alphabets, 1918; cf. Dussaud: Civilization préhell., p. 432; Lidzbarski: Ephemeris II, p. 371.

Sayce expressed his opinion that the derivation of the Semitic alphabet was perhaps Hittite, and the invention was through a person. But, this is hardly probable; and, though a few signs in the alphabet of Ras Shamra (a cuneiform alphabet in the 14th cent. B.C.) show some similarity to Hittite signs, we shall revert to this matter in another connection.

On the other hand, the Egyptian view was revived in a paper published in the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, vol. iii (1916) p. 1ff., by Dr. Alan Gardiner. This paper dealt with previously mentioned inscriptions discovered in 1906 by Sir W. Flinders Petrie in the Sinaitic peninsula. In them Dr. Gardiner saw a stage of writing between Egyptian hieroglyphic and the Semitic alphabet. The script is also known as the Serâbît Inscriptions, because they were found in Serâbît el-Khadîm. The script proved itself fully alphabetic, showing the most primitive forms of the Semitic alphabet ever found. As to the language, it is clearly not Egyptian, though several of the signs are good Egyptian characters. The word 𐤀𐤃𐤓𐤕¹ (our

1. pace H. Bauer, though he proposes wholly different values in *Zur Entzifferung d. neuentdeckten Sinaischrift*, Halle, a. S., 1918.

one solid piece of evidence) suggests that it is Semitic, and probably Canaanite written in *scripta defectiva*. (*Details will be considered later in this paper*). In recent years, after Gardiner, such scholars such as Sethe, Bauer, Grimme, Ullman, Bruston, Cowley, and others, have published interesting opinions of their own concerning this script; and most of the recent numbers of those magazines such as *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, and *American Journal of Archaeology*, as well as *Revue Biblique* are creating new interest with their latest discussions on the decipherment of the inscriptions. We must be forewarned, however, lest we be led to believe that they settle the question of the origin of the Semitic alphabet, for we are apt to look for ~~for~~ an *Urbild* in a *Vorbild*.

In the foregoing rapid sketch of the history of these theories we detect the three hypotheses in which all other minor opinions can be included and under which the question can most conveniently be discussed, namely, 1. Cypriote-Cretan, 2. Babylonian-Assyrian, and 3. Egypto-Sinaitic.

PART. I

HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEARCH
FOR THE ORIGIN OF THE SEMITIC ALPHABETS

I. CYPRIOTE-CRETAN HYPOTHESIS

The matter shall be treated roughly under the following headings:

- A. The Cypriote and Cretan scripts
- B. "The Cretan Origin" by A.J.Evans
- C. The weakness of Evans' theory
- D. The analytical criticism of the hypothesis -
linguistic, historical, and archaeological

A. The Cypriote and Cretan scripts

(1) Cypriote script

Cypriote script is a local variant of the ancient Mediterranean syllabary, perhaps the most developed one in the Aegean area. There are some fifty-four characters in the Cypriote syllabary,¹ all linear like those shown in the following, most of which stand for phonetic syllables. The list has been taken from the newest book in this field, *Alphabete und Schriftzeichen des Morgen-und des Abendlandes*, arranged and printed by Reichsdruckrei in 1924.²

1. Dr. Hermann Collitz in "Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften" gives a chart of several hundred variants of this syllabary taken from inscribed (to next p.)

Transcript.	Sign	Transcript.	Sign
a	✱	go,ko,cho	Λ { [*] Λ [*] ϑ
ba,pa,pha	⊕	gu,ku,chu	✱
be,pe,phe	∪	da,ta,tha	†
bi,pi,phi ¹	∨ * √	de,te,the	⊥ * ⊥
bo,po,pho	∪ * ϑ	di,ti,thi	↑ ↑
bu,pu,phu	⊥	do,to,tho	F * K
ga,ka,cha	⊥ * ↑	du,tu,thu	⊥ ⊥
ge,ke,che	✱ √	e	✱ √ * H
gi,ki,chi	⊥ * ⊥		

1. "Die Deutung des paphischen Zeichens als bi usw. ist nicht völlig sicher;"
but cf. Japanese pa(ハ°) = ba(ハ'').

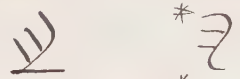
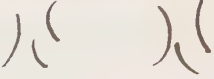
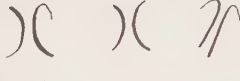
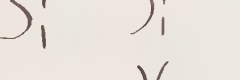
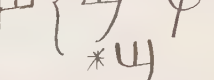
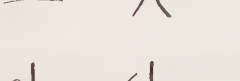
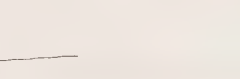
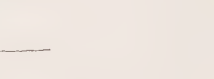
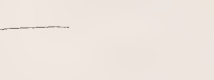
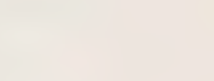
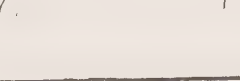
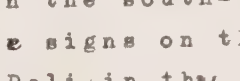
Fig. 1. Cypriote Syllabary.

fragments found at Golgoi, Salamis, Idalion, Arsinoe and other localities. Prof. Dr. Wilhelm Larfield in "Handbuch der griechischen Epigraphik" also illustrates this signary, giving scores of variants of the then-known fifty-two phonetic syllables constituting the syllabary.

2. Cf. Carl Paulmann, Das Buch der Schrift, Wien, 1880.

Transcript.	Sign	Transcript.	Sign
va	)\ * \X	yo	— V V * X
ve	И	yu	—
vi	)'(	ka) ²	—
vo	ᳵ ᳶ	la	Y
vu	—	le	8 X * J=
za	)\ * \)	li	≤ ≥
ze	—	lo	+
zi	—	lu	∪
zo	}}	ma	)\ \X * \)
zu	—	me	X
tha ¹	—	ri	∩ ∪ Y
i	X X ¹	mo	— ⊕ ∇ * □
ya	○ * ○	mu	—
ye	* Y Z	na	T
yi	—	ne	ſ' ISI

1. tha etc. = da etc.2. ka etc. = ga etc.

Transcript.	Sign	Transcript.	Sign
ni		ru	
no		sa	
nu		se	
xa		si	
xe		so	
xi		su	
xo		ta)	
xu		u	
o		pha)	
pa)		cha)	
ra			
re			
ri			
ro			

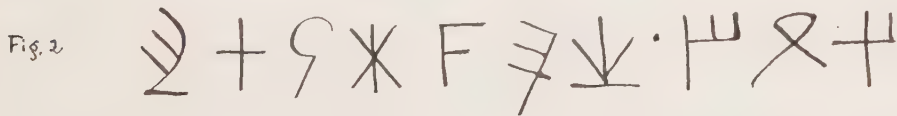
Remarks. Those signs marked with asterisks were used especially in the south-west and west of the island (Paphos); those signs on the first line are the letters of Edalion (=Dali, in the center of the island.).

This is not the only syllabary in the ancient Mediterranean area, but quite a number of scripts written in this syllabary suggests that this was perhaps the most developed and simplified one in that sphere. It must have been preceded by Cretan and other Mediterranean signaries. Flinders Petrie in his "Tombs of Abydos" published a very elaborate signary of several hundred characters in use in countries around the Mediterranean area, from a period, according to his estimate, as early as 6000 B.C. He has collected his data from potsherds, vases, engraved stones and other objects found chiefly in Egyptian tombs and the debris of ruined cities. On the island of Cyprus a local variant of this ancient Mediterranean syllabary was in use and lingered late into the Greek period. It became very much transformed, losing much of the archaic form of the Cretan script, if there was ever any connection between the two. Louis P. Di Cesnola, who spent a number of years in the island of Cyprus exploring and excavating the sites of ancient cities, brought to light an extraordinary amount of art objects.

Among them were many inscriptions in the Cypriote signary, which had been abandoned elsewhere, but here, as has been mentioned had survived until the middle of the 6th century B.C. They are in a dialect of the Greek language and are read from right to left in the Oriental manner. The decipherment has been done through the scholarship of George Smith. A few examples of decipherment are shown below to illustrate the nature of the script.

Examples of decipherment:

The following is ~~the~~ a reproduction of an inscription on a stone implement in the immense Cesnola collection¹ of objects from Cyprus in the Metropolitan Art Museum in New York City:



Reading from right to left the syllables run:

e-ro-se-te-ke-to-a-po-lo-ni

In Greek this would read:

"Ἡρώς ἔθηκε Ἀπο(λ)λωνι

"Heros offered it to Appolo."

1. A Descriptive Atlas of the Cesnola Collection of Cypriote Antiquities in the Metropl. Art Mus., N.Y. City.

The next one is the inscription from Golgoi (Cesnola).

Fig. 3



This is rudely carved on calcareous stone with figures in relief. Reading these from right to left the syllables are as follows:

Ti-ya-i-te-mi-to-i-te-o

To-a-po-lo-no-o-ne-te-ke

u-tu-ka

The translation of this into Greek which these Cyprians probably spoke, shows the evident inadequacy of this syllabary for their language:

Διια(θεμι(ς) τῶι θεῶ

το 'Απο(λ)λωνι ὀνεθηκέ

ὁ ι(ν)ι(ν) τυχα

"Diyaaithemis offered me to

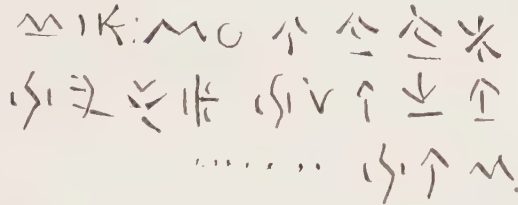
the god Apollo

In good fortune."

The next one is an inscription found by Cesnola at Paphos in Cyprus. The ending of the final line clearly

shows that it reads from right to left.

Fig. 4



Prof. Sayce interprets this inscription as follows:

a-si-ka-ti-ya-u-e-mi

ka-te-ti-sa-ne-e-pi-ke-ne

u-vo-ne

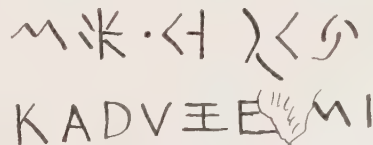
In Greek this would be:

Ἀσικαθίταις ἡμεῖς κατέθισαν ἐπὶ κενευρόν.

"I am Asikathiyas. They set(me) up over
(this) Cenotaph."

Lastly, the following is one of the bilingual inscriptions that have helped in the translation of the Cypriote syllabary. It is from Golgoi.

Fig. 5.



In English this reads: "Karux am I."

In all these inscriptions each word or word-group is divided by a short vertical stroke or by a point in the center of the space.

Literature:

Verzeichnis bei Otto Hoffmann: Die griechischen Dialekte I S.35, Tafel, S.32.

Richard Meister: Sitzungsber. der Preussischen Akademie 1911, Tafel S.682.

Hermann Collitz: Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften.

Wilhelm Larfield: Handbuch der griechischen Epigraphik.

Having perused the Cypriote syllabary, we do not see that this script offers any important contribution toward the solving of the problem. Praetorius¹ sought the origin of the Semitic alphabet in this syllabary. He affirmed a close relationship between the two scripts not only in the form of the signs, but also, in the manner of applying the sounds in the Cypriote syllabary. For example, *pa, pe, pi, po, pu* could be con-

1. Praetorius: Ueber den Ursprung des Kanaanitischen Alphabets, 1906: ZDMG 63(1909), S.192ff.

sidered as one single p, so the Canaanite might have possibly combined them into the one. Though everything leads to that supposition, there is no positive evidence at the back of this theory. Prior to any discussion against this theory, I am inclined to think of the system of syllabary as a totally different mode of writing from the alphabet; that is to say, the former is not one of the stages in the development of a true alphabet. Presuming that both the syllabary and alphabet are derived from the primitive pictographies, they are brothers, and not father and son. I am not trying here to put an end to the discussion, but the following fact must be remembered in relation to my suggestion, that the Cypriote syllabary was in use and lingered until the middle of the 6th century B.C. If there had been any potentiality in the Cypriote syllabary of developing into the final stage of an alphabet, the Greeks would have devised an alphabet out of it for themselves long before.¹ Psychologically it is more difficult to get an alphabet out of a syllabary

1. It must be recognized in any case that the Cypriote syllabary itself has every appearance of having been devised for a non-Hellinic language.

than the latter out of the former.¹ Scientifically considered, the mere fact that a syllabary had existed in Cyprus would hardly mean anything for the solution of our problem. When we come to learn that most of the Cypriote inscriptions are several hundred years later than the earliest known Phoenician inscriptions, all hope of seeing the origin of the Phoenician alphabet in the Cypriote syllabary will be dissipated. If we were to look for the solution of our problem in any of the scripts among those of the Aegean area, the Cretan script would be of more interest in its relationship to the Philistine problem.

(2) Cretan script

Diodorus Siculus,² the Greek historian, wrote: "Some pretend that the Syrians were the inventors of letters, and that the Phoenicians learnt from the Syrians and brought the art of writing to Greece, whence the name of Phoenician alphabet. But the Cretans say that the first discovery came not from Phoenicia but from Crete, and that the Phoenicians only changed the type of the letters, and made the

1. Cf. the Ethiopian and Japanese syllabaries.

2. *Supra*, p. 5.

knowledge of them general among the peoples."

A new impulse was given to the study by A.J.Evans, since 1894,through his discovery of the old Cretan(Minoan) inscriptions. His first big publication¹ caused Fries² to develop the Cretan theory,which was later reemphasized by Evans in his *Scripta Minoa I*, published in 1909. According to this theory the alphabet was taken over from Crete to Palestine by the Philistines in the 13th century B.C. and it is from them that the Phoenician borrowed. This suggestion, in connection with the Philistine problem,must necessarily be carefully treated.

In the island of Crete there appears to have been from an exceedingly early age,long antedating civilization in Greece proper,a highly civilized state in which the art of writing,apparently indigenous in its primitive stages,seems to have been practiced many centuries before its appearing on the mainland. It

1. Primitive Photographs and Pre-Phoenician Script in Crete and Peloponnese, 1895.

2. Die neuesten Forschungen ueber den Ursprung des Phoenikischen Alphabets,in: Zeitschr.des deutsch.Paläst. Ver. XXII, 1899, S. 118f.

is plainly acknowledged that Crete, which, before the Dorian invasion in the 12th century B.C. scattered its population over the Aegean islands, was the center of a very early Mycenaean civilization. Minos, king of Crete, was the first law-giver of Greece. He is noted as the builder of the famous Labyrinth, one of the seven wonders of the world. Arthur J. Evans lately has discovered in the ruins of the Palace of Knossos, Crete, a large number of remarkable inscriptions belonging to this early Minoan period of civilization.

This civilization extended over a period of 1200 years or more, beginning about 2500 B.C. and ending with the complete destruction of the Minoan civilization about 1300 B.C. It was thus contemporaneous with the most powerful dynasties in Egypt. The oldest of the inscriptions discovered in Crete are pictographic; while the later ones are in a linear script which has every appearance of being a phonetic syllabary, though not yet deciphered. The pictographic inscriptions belong to an extremely archaic period, estimated by Evans to be in the third millenium B.C. They

contain quite a number of elements which are so much like the Hittite hieroglyphs as to point to a common use if not a common origin of quite a few conventional types of symbols.

Many of these pictographic inscriptions are found engraved on gems and on three- and four-sided prismatic seals in carnelian, jasper, steatite and other stones, quantities of which have been found in ancient ossuaries, cemeteries and elsewhere throughout Crete. When carefully examined, some of them will not let us escape from a feeling that they are perhaps syllabic characters constituting a written record, though some look like mere pictographs. Several inscriptions will be chosen for examination.



Fig. 6. Face of four-sided seal found in Crete, engraved with pictographs. 1

1. *Scripta Minoa* I p. 8, 157.

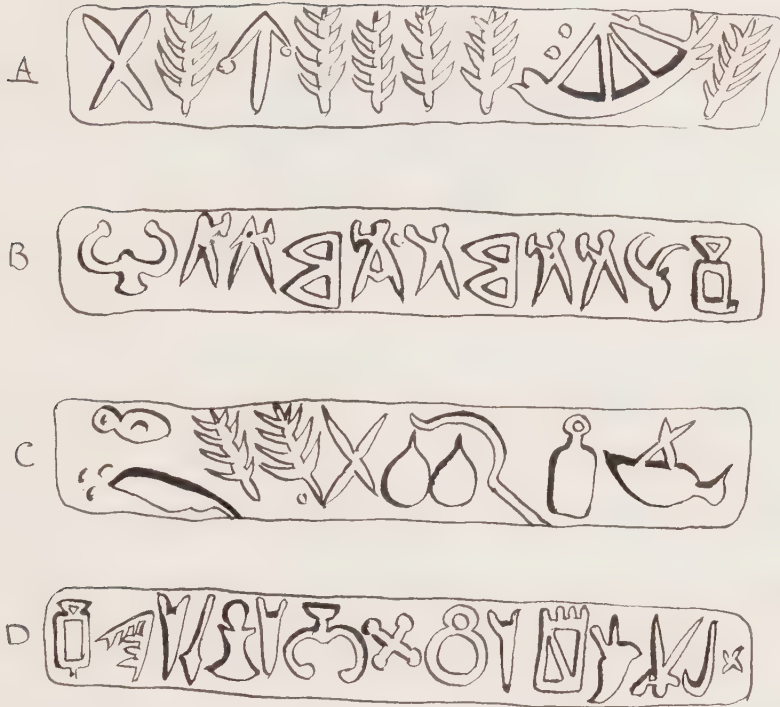


Fig. 7. Four sided seal in red carnelian from Crete, engraved with pictographs and hieroglyphs.¹

It can readily be seen that some of the latter symbols are almost perfect counterparts of the linear Babylonian signs.

The following engraved pictographs and symbols are strikingly reminiscent of the Hittite symbols. The double-headed battle ax on the left is an oft-recurring

1. Scripta Minoa I p. 154.

symbol in these Cretan pictographs.¹



Fig.8. Three-sided carnelian seal engraved with various Cretan pictographs and symbols.

Still more stimulating is the linear script inscribed on tablets, many hundreds of which have been found in various places of Crete. The older ones are called by Evans Class A, constituting of highly conventionalized forms, and the later geometric script is called by him Class B. 150 inscribed clay tablets were found in the villa of ~~Nagli~~ Hagia Triada, near ^hPaestos, the probable date of which is given by Evans as covering the period 1800-1600 B.C.; a period from 300-500 years earlier than the Ahiaram inscription (c.1300 B.C.). Examples are given below.

1. A.J.Evans, in "Cretan Pictographs and Pre-Phoenician Script", analyses over a hundred of these pictographic symbols and shows the connection of many of them with the ancient Aegean signary and with the Phoenician alphabet.

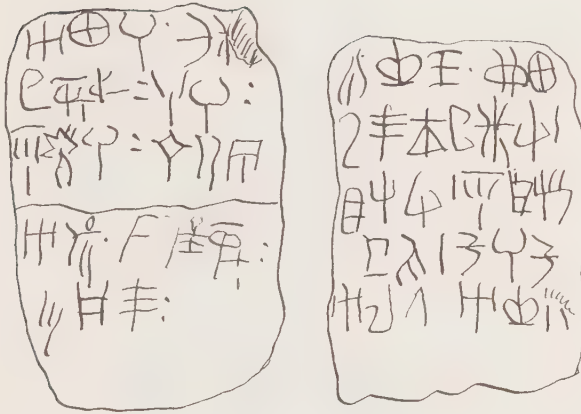


Fig.9. Examples of Cretan linear script of Evans' Class A, found in the villa of Hagia Triada, near Phaestos, Crete. Probable date, 1800 B.C. *Scripta Minoa*, p.34.

The later form of tablet inscriptions (Class B), which date from about 1600 to 1300 B.C., contains many elements of the earlier style. Evans warns us against the conclusion that Class B merely evolved out of the other, because several of the signs belonging to it are not found in Class A, and that some of those which are shared by both 'signaries' appear in a more primitive form upon tablets belonging to Class B.

Be that as it may, our question is whether or not we can detect in this script any bit of alphabetic system.

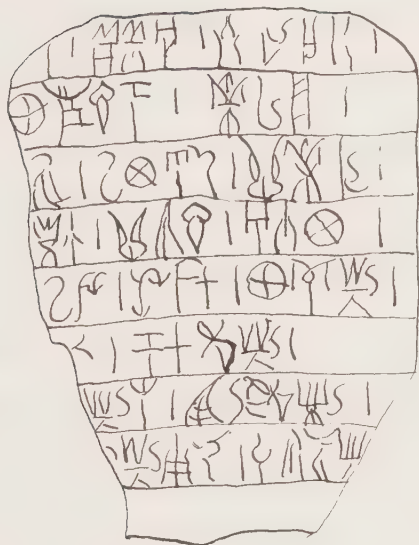


Fig. 10. Geometric linear script from Knossos, illustration of A.J. Evans' Class B inscription from Crete. Probable date, 1600 to 1300 B.C. S.M.I. p. 49.

It may be that the whole physiognomy of this linear script shown above attests a very considerable advance in the art of writing. They are of upright habit and of a simple and definite outline. Evans adds that the characters themselves have "an European aspect." The only question for us is whether they are used as syllables or as alphabetic letters. We are now touching the main question. As the decipherment of the Cretan script is not yet accomplished, nothing can definitely be said, except that compound forms seem to occur here and there in the inscription, and that, quite often. Even this may

all be doubted. It would not do any harm, however, to develop our investigation in decipherment with this hypothetical presumption. But, for the present, it would not be a sound step to approach the problem from this direction. Therefore, let us dispose of the question of decipherment for the time being by simply leaving a doubt. Since they are so very interesting, however, we would once more be tempted to turn our attention to one of the many engraved whorls, belonging to this early Minoan period of civilization, used in weaving, or ~~elsewhere~~ possibly for adornment. These also were found in Knossos and elsewhere in Crete.



Fig. 11. Inscribed whorl from Crete, with pre-Phoenician Characters. S.M.I.p. 118.

Of the six characters, five correspond to the later Greek, and even Roman letters. Yet the forms are too much developed to be the prototype of the Phoenician alphabet.

B. "The Cretan Origin" by A.J.Evans

Very briefly the hypothesis of A.J.Evans is that a number of similarities exist between the Cretan signs and the Phoenician letters, which would lead us to believe that there is a certain relationship between the two scripts. His search for the origin of the Phoenician alphabet is solely from this angle. Evans gives at first the names of seven or eight

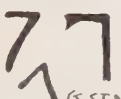
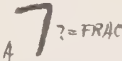
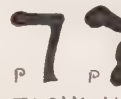
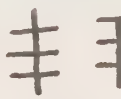
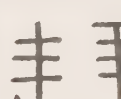
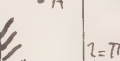
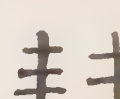
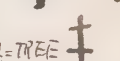
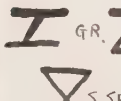
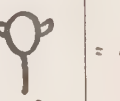
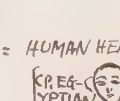
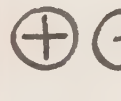
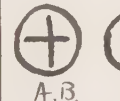
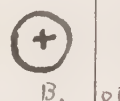
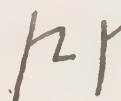
	PHOENICIAN &	CRETAN LINEAR	CRETAN HIEROGLYPHS		PHOENICIAN ETC.	CRETAN LINEAR A-B	CRETAN HIEROGLYPHS
GIMEL (GAMMA)	 (S. SEMITIC)	 A  B = FRACTION	 P EARLY LINEAR FORM OF LEG SIGN.	SAMEK	 GR. 	 A  A	 P  B = TREE
ZAIN (ZETA)	 GR. Z S. SEMITIC	 A FROM GROUP ON POT	 P DOUBLE AXE	KOPH (KOPPA)	 GR. 	 A  A. B.	 P = HUMAN HEAD [CRETAN- EYPTIAN HRS. FACE]
TETH (THETA)		 A, B.  B.	 PICTOGRAPH OF WHEEL (CLASS B)	TSAD E		 A  A	 P A. DZE
LAMED (LAMBDA)		 A.  A.	 CROOK				

Fig. 12. Phoenician, & etc., letters of uncertain meaning compared with Minoan signs, SCRIPTA MINOA I p. 87, fig. 41 (Table V).

of the original twenty two letters of the Phoenician alphabet, which cannot be interpreted by any known Semitic language.¹ What interests him most in the table given above is the parallel Minoan forms in favor of a similar pictorial origin. He is not sure what these Minoan signs mean nor how they are pronounced. His logic seems weak at this point. He gives, further, comparisons of a series of Phoenician or other Semitic letters, the names of which bear ascertained meanings, with characters of the Minoan signaries.

1. Cf. J. P. Peters: Recent Theories of the Origin of the Alphabet.

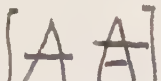
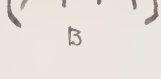
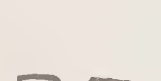
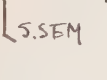
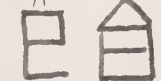
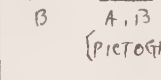
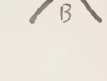
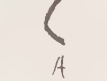
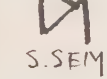
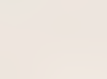
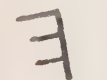
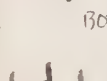
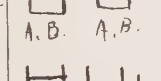
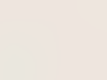
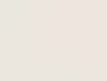
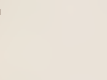
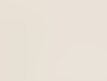
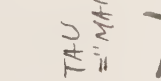
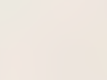
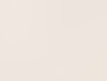
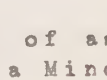
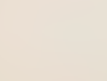
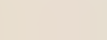
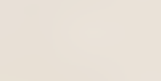
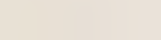
PHOENICIAN ETC.	CRETAN LINEAR A & B	CRETAN HIEROGLYPHS	PHOENICIAN ETC.	CRETAN LINEAR A & B	CRETAN HIEROGLYPHS
ALPHA (ALPHA) = "OX"  GR.  GR.  GR. 	 B  A  A, B 	 P.L.  P.L. 	   	 A  A  A 	  
BETH (BETH) = "HOUSE"  S.SEM  SAFA 	 A  B  A, B 	 IDEOGRAPH OF STOREHOUSE CLASS B   	   	 A  B  A 	  
DALETH (DELTA) = "DOOR"  S.SEM.  	 B. (IN COMPOUND)  ORCHOMENOS 	  	 S.SEM.   	 A   	  
VAU (F.V.) = "TENT BEG"  GR.  	 B  	  	   	 B.   	  
CHÊTH (H) = "FENCE" (HÊ) = "FENCE" (HÊ)  BODEOTIANE  NINEVEH 	 A, B.  A, B.  A 	   	 SIDAON  TYRE  LYTTOS 	 B  A  	  
TAU = "MARK"   	 A  	  	  	 P.  	 

Fig. 18. Phoenician, &c., letters with names of ascertained meaning compared with Minoan signs: Scripta Minoa, p. 89.

All through the series of his comparisons, Evans is again not certain of the meanings and pronunciations of the Minoan signaries. He is inclined to think that names such as teth and koph were literally taken over from the original tongue — *ex hypothesi* that of the Philistine colonists; and in some cases, again, the names represent, perhaps, the first syllable, closed or otherwise, of the original word. Evans says, "The most natural meeting-place of the North and South Semitic groups would be Gaza, the principal Mediterranean outlet of the South Arabian trade routes, and the point where they debouch upon the highway leading from Northern Canaan and Syria to Egypt." The north and south Semitic alphabets were, therefore, branched out from Gaza, each of the two choosing different forms of letters. Sir Arthur J. Evans has carried on his theory so far without being able to decipher the Cretan script! What chiefly dominates his thought is "the striking similarities of the form of letters between the two scripts."

C. The weakness of the Cretan hypothesis

The basis of the Cretan hypothesis developed by Evans and others, lies only in the striking similarities of form between Cretan characters and the Semitic letters. But, in the first place, these same similarities exist between Semitic and Egyptian, and one may well argue for the Egyptian origin of the Cretan script.¹ Such is the position of J. Sundwall in his *Der Ursprung der kretischen Schrift*, published in 1920. In the second place, one must not be misled by a few striking similarities between scripts of pictographic origin. This point is made clear when we take signs made by primitive peoples in various parts of the world and compare them with the alphabet. It will be pertinent to the case to refer to Flinders Petrie, who, in his *Tombs of Abydos*, published a very elaborate signary of several hundred characters in use in countries around the Mediterranean area, from a period, according to his estimate, as early as 6000 B.C. He has collected his data from various objects found chiefly in Egyptian tombs and the debris of ruined

1. Prof. Sir Flinders Petrie published in 1912 'The Formation of the Alphabet,' in which he argues that both Phoenician and Greek alphabets together with those of Asia Minor, the south Semitic, Cypriote, and certain Egyptian scripts, developed from that series of conventional marks or signs employed for commercial purposes throughout the Mediterranean area from earliest times. (- to the bottom of n. page)

cities. His dates are estimated by the known dates in Egyptian history, and by the vast accumulations of deposits. Prehistoric shards have been unearthed in neolithic strata with lines of continuous signs, evidently writing, painted long before the hieroglyphs were invented. The great majority of these ancient signaries are quite similar in general appearance to Cretan characters and Phoenician letters. It will be well to refer to Danzel who gives, in his *Die Anfänge der Schrift*, a series of primitive ownership symbols.¹ They are in no way connected with Egyptian or Semitic writing, and yet they show striking similarities, now to the Phoenician, now to the new Sinai-characters.

1. 1912, Pl. IV.

(continued) The same may be said of Morlet's attempts ("Mercur de France," Dec. 15, 1926, pp. 568ff., and earlier articles) to derive the alphabet from marks found at Glazel which he attributes to the early neolithic period. Full of absurdities as his theory is, some of the examples are just striking *γφ/αζζφζζ/αβ/* enough to afford us material for reflection.

Primitive	○	≡			x +			⊕		
Sinai	○		◊	⋈ ⋈	+	⊕	⊗	↓	□	
Phoenician	○	≡	◊	⋈	x +	⊕ ⊕	⊗	⊕	⋈	□ □

Fig. 14. Comparison of primitive signs: from Danzel.

SIDELIGHTS:

I would like to mention an incidental coincidence in the similarities of form which can be found between certain letters of the Korean alphabet, which was devised in the middle of the 15th century B.C. on the basis of Sanskrit, and those of the Japanese syllabary, which is of Chinese derivation. The following

letters of like form are found with totally different sounds, without mentioning that the origin are of the north and the south:

Korean		Japanese		Chinese originals
フ	= k	フ	= whu	不
ロ	= m	ロ	= ro	呂
ヲ	= kh	ヲ	= wo	乎
ト	= a	ト	= to	土
マ	= k - a	マ	= ma	末
、	= a	、	= comma	

Fig. 15. Comparison of Japanese and Korean characters.

On the contrary, identity of origin does not always warrant similar forms. There are two styles of syllabary in Japanese, namely Hirakana and Katakana, of which a bit of the latter has been shown above, and the former in the following: How can a foreigner see the connection between the two?

Japanese		Chinese
い	ゐ	← 伊 伊 伊
ろ	ろ	呂 呂 呂
は		波 波 波
に		仁 仁 仁
ほ		保 保 保
etc.		

Fig. 16. Japanese and Chinese characters.

As is shown above, the process by which the Chinese characters have been transformed into Japanese syllables is through quite a logical series of simplifications. On the other hand, the difference between the two scripts is so marked that no one can tell the relationship, unless he were familiar with the history of the simplifying process.

The danger and the logical weakness of the Cretan hypothesis lies in its relying too much upon the mere similarities of form between the Cretan characters and the alphabet of Phoenicia, and in being urged irrespective of the necessity of the knowledge of the decipherment Cretan script.

D. The analytical criticism of Evans' theory - *linguistic, historical, and archaeological.*

At present the Cretan hypothesis suffers from the immaturity of the linguistic, historical, and archaeological researches applied to it. If Cretans, however, could be related in any sense to the Philistine invasion as Evans does in his *Scripta Minoa*, it would

be of some interest to our problem. Our attention will be directed in the following, therefore, to the Philistine problem in relation to the dates of early Phoenician inscriptions.

(1) Philistine problem

Let us not lose ourselves, however, in the labyrinth of the Philistine problem by merely dwelling upon details. The most important point to be solved is, for us, none other than this: Whence came the Philistines to Palestine? For a fuller knowledge of the various phases of the problem, both historically and topically, we refer, as the shortest way, to the recent work by Dr. George Percy Hedley,¹ in which he makes a comprehensive review of all materials pertinent to this topic, up to the date of April, 1928. There are three ~~of~~ hypotheses as to the possible regions of ~~the~~ origin of the Philistines: namely, Crete, Asia Minor, and the Balkans. If we fail to associate the Philistines with the Cretans, the hypothesis of the Cretan origin of the Phoenician alphabet, which has been a favorite

1. Dr. George Percy Hedley: Prolegomena to the Study of the Philistine Problem, 1928: a thesis for the doctorate in the Pacific School of Religion.

theory of A.J.Evans,would be reduced to a serious difficulty. Tentatively assuming,for the present, the Cretan origin of the Philistines,let us try to make contacts between several of the numerous interesting groups of facts.

The Cretan Rameses III(1198-1167 B.C.)
origin of found himself confronted with
the Philistines a peculiar situation from the beginning of his reign. The Egyptian Delta and the coasts of Palestine were invaded by hordes of people from over the sea. Rameses III in his inscriptions on the walls of his temple of Medinet Habu makes the following statements:¹

"The northern countries are unquiet in their limbs,even the Peleset(Philistines),the Thekel, who devastated their land

O my august father(i.e.,the god Amon)came to take them,being:the Peleset,the Denyen(Dardanians),and the Shekelesh(Sicilians).....

Utterance of the vanquished Peleset: "Give to us the breath for our nostrils,O king,son of Amon."

According to Biblical tradition the Philistines

1. Breasted: Ancient Records, Egypt, IV, 44, 81, & 82.

In spite of the last objection, recent excavations of the same kind of wares both in Philistia and Crete,¹

A plea for from the strata of the first
'the Philistine iron age, added one more bit of
influence' evidence to the theory of the

Cretan origin of the Philistines. Just at the time when history tells us that the Philistines came into Palestine, we begin to find in its mounds the remains of a more ornate pottery. On the site of Gezer have been found fragments of imported pottery, some of them in the Knossian Palace style,¹ a 'horned' bronze sword of Minoan form,² and even architectural features of Cretan type according to the observation of Dr. Duncan Mackenzie. Not only were the Philistines superior to those of Israel in their arms and armour and chariots of war, but they also excelled in the arts of peace, thus being able to dominate their subjects and neighbors by means of their higher civilization. In the Bible we learn that the Hebrews were compelled

1. Evans, Prehistoric Tombs of Knossos, 1906, pp. 107, 128.

2. vide Cesnola: Cypriote Antiquities, vol. II; also Dr. G. P. Hedley: Proleg. to the Phil. Prob., pp. 157-160; The largest quantities were discovered at Tell es-Safi, Tell el-Jezari, 'Ain shems and Askalon. Some examples occurred at Ta'anach and Megiddo. Four fragments were found in two seasons of work at Tell en-Nasbeh.

to go to the smiths of the 'uncircumcized' for their ploughshares and agricultural implements.¹ The golden mice and tumours wrought by Philistine artificers as guilt-offerings for the Ark of the Lord,² moreover, throw an incidental light on their skill in plastic art; and at the same time recall the votive images of animals and diseased human members placed in the old Cretan sanctuaries like that of Petsofa.³ The Cherethites, associated with the Philistine district (I Sam. xxx. 14, 16; Ezek. xxv. 16; Zeph. ii. 5 seq.), are sometimes recognized by the Septuagint as Cretans; and with the Pelethites, they form part of the royal bodyguard of Judaeans kings. (2 Sam. viii. 18; xv. 7; I Ki. 38, 44; in 2 Sam. xx. 28 the Hebrew text has Carites.), maintaining the old Cretan tradition as skillful bowmen.⁴ Attention has already been called to the actual exhumation of a sword of late Minoan derivation. As it has been pointed out, the vases

1. I Sam. xiii. 19; cf., too, I Sam. xxxi. 3.

2. I Sam. vi. 4 seqq.

3. J. L. Myres, *P. S. Annual*, ix. pp. 356 seqq.

4. I Sam. xxxi. 3.

imported from the Aegean area show that their taste in ceramics remained the same. Arguing from all these facts of their higher civilization, though it must not be exaggerated, there are good a priori grounds for supposing that they had not wholly forgotten — ex hypothesi — their insular script.¹

Semitization

of the

Philistines

It must be recognized, at the same time, that the Philistines appear in the Old Testament as a somewhat Semitized people, e.g., the male god Dagon has his partner Astarte, and Ba'al-zebub, a famous oracle of Ekron (2 K. 1) resembles the local "ba'al" of Palestine, et cetera. The frequent Philistine oppressions of Judah all through the reigns of Samson, Eli, Samuel, Saul, and David, prove the contact of the Philistines with the inner regions of Palestine. (Cf. the so-called Philistine wares at Tell en-Nasbeh!). Their pretty rapid Semitization, therefore, is not a matter to be doubted. As one of the evidences of their Semitization in later times, especially in language, the following passage in the book of Nehemiah is interesting in this connection: "In those days also saw I the Jews that had married women of Ashdod,

1. Cf. Dr. Hedley's Prol., p. 206.

Of Ammon, and of Moab: and their children spake half in speech of Ashdod, and could not speak in the Jew's language, but according to the language of each people." (Neh. xiii. 23, 24). Whether this 'speech of Ashdod' means merely one of the dialects of a Semitic language or the degenerate speech of the original language of the Philistines is not yet solved.

Thus, the Semitization which the Philistines had undergone must have been quite rapid, and they ^{were} already a half Semitized people at the time of the Chronicler.¹ A conqueror has always been found conquered, as history shows, by the language and civilization of the land into which he has intruded; as are the cases of the Babylonians with the Sumerian cuneiforms and the Hebrews with the 'lip of Canaan.' (Is. xix. 18). The influence of the Philistines upon the Phoenicians — ex hypothesi — with their script, must have been active only for a short period at the beginning of their settlement in the coast lands about 1200 B.C.

1. Cf. Heb. מִצְרַיִם, מִצְרַיִם-לְעַמּוֹ, מִצְרַיִם; but מִצְרַיִם? (Τυραννός(?)), but LXX σατραπης, Josephus: ἀρχων, cf. Eng. 'Tyrant.'

So far as our present materials are concerned, however, we have no positive authority to conclude that the Philistines came to Palestine carrying over the 'Cretan script.' To establish the Cretan hypothesis we are obliged to go back again to Evans' theory of the "striking similarities," the unreliable nature of which we have already pointed out.¹

Crossing over the 'ancient' river of Kishon to the Phoenician side, we find the alphabetic inscriptions on sarcophagi of more weight, in considering our problem, than the mere fragments of Philistine wares.

(2) Early Phoenician inscriptions

Until a little more than ten years ago, the earliest examples of the Phoenician alphabet were to be found in the Moabite Stone (c. 850 B.C.), and in a votive inscription to Ba'al-Lebanon discovered in Cyprus.² In these inscrip-

1. *Supra*, pp. 85ff.

2. If the Hiram mentioned in this inscription is the Hiram of King Solomon's time, the inscription may date from the beginning of the 10th century B.C.

tions, the Phoenician alphabet is found in its final stage of development toward conventionalization; the style of this alphabet being called Moabite or Tyrian, to which belong such inscriptions as those of Mesha', Ba'al-Lebanon, and as of more cursive form, Siloam. Since the discovery of the Ahiram inscription which was unearthed by Montet in Gebal (Byblos), in 1923, special attention has been directed to this more archaic form of lettering than to any other found in Phoenicia.¹ It was found on the sarcophagus of King Ahiram, in two places; one on a smaller side, and the other on a larger side. The form of letters bear close resemblance to the inscription of Abi-ba'al, discovered some years ago on the same site.² The question whether or not the Phoenician alphabet came out by the impulse of the Philistine civilization, largely depends, for its solution, upon the dating of these inscriptions. If a date earlier than the invasion of the Philistines into Palestine is come

1. René Dussaud: *Syria* 5, 1924, pp. 135-157; H. Vincent: *Revue Biblique*, 1925; Gressmann, *Texte u. Bilder*, i. 440; ii. 189-192 & Pl. coliv., 1927.

2. id.: *Syria* 5, 1924, pp. 145 ff.

upon, we will be again thrown into difficulty in accounting for the implanting process of the alphabet from the Cretan script.

<u>Inscriptions</u>	There are only three early
<u>of Ahiram,</u>	Phoenician inscriptions known
<u>Abiba'al &</u>	to us, and all these were found
<u>Eliba'al</u>	only very recently from Byblos, which

are: those of Ahiram, Abi-ba'al, and Eli-ba'al. All others collected in CIS are of later dates. The inscription of Abi-ba'al was found on the socle of a statue of the Egyptian King Sheshonk I (945-924 B.C.);¹ therefore, this inscription belongs to the 10th century B.C. The inscription of Eli-ba'al was found on a statue of Osorkon II, one of the kings of the twenty-second dynasty which Sheshonk I founded; therefore, this inscription is dated a little after the former. There seem to be no serious difficulty in connection with the dates of these two inscriptions. There remains some doubt, however, as to the date of the Ahiram inscription.

1. IK. xii. 40; xiv. 25-28.

(3) The Ahiram inscription

a. The circumstances of discovery

In 1923, M. Pierre

Montet was engaged in his third campaign of excavation on the site of Byblos (Gabal) to explore three tombs dating back to the 12th dynasty of Egypt, and, in the second place, one hypogeum V which had been hewn at the time of Rameses II. In the course of digging the Hypogeum V, a palaeographic text written in the Phoenician alphabet was found appearing on the wall south of the shaft, situated up halfway. When M. Montet entered into the funeral chamber he discovered further, on two edges of the cover of the superb sarcophagus, an inscription incised with the same characters as those on the shaft. By various archaeological vestiges, he immediately concluded that it was an inscription 400 years older than that of Mesha.¹ The Ahiram inscription contains all the letters of the Phoenician alphabet except three: *daleth*, *šade*, and *qoph*, and therefore, it greatly facilitates the furtherance of palaeographical study or research. An arrow-head of the contemporary period

1. Montet: *Lettre à M. le Secrétaire perpétuel, Syria*, 1923, p. 342 et suiv.

was found by P.E.Guigues at Roueisseh near Nabatyeh in Southern Syria,¹ which was inscribed with two of the missing letters, daleth and sade, so that we have practically the complete alphabet of the thirteenth century B.C. The inscription² appears as follows:

159BK (1691K (5159BK) 591609 + William Lo) I 159 K 7.

560917 + WV 79K

$$1 + \zeta_3 + \zeta_3^2 + \zeta_3^4 + \zeta_3^5 = -1$$

14) + 3 + 13 ⊕) w 5 19 ⊕ 11) 7 + 11 + 15 I 59 K 1 6 12 Y 1 6 9 1 2 6 0

(69-11)(C.I.9) 7月21日 37.6971(0.049+1)日 57.3465°E 74.4

Fig. 17. Inscription on the sarcophagus of Ahiram.
Facsimile after the squeeze. 2

1. P.E.Guigues: Pointe de flèche en bronze, in Melanges de l'Université Saint Joseph, XI, 325; Ronzevalle: Note sur le texte phénicien de la flèche publiée par M.P.E.Guigues, ibid., 325ff.

2. René Dussaud: Syria, 1924, pp. 135-157; H. Vincent: Revue Biblique, 1925; Gredsmann: Texte u. Bilder, i. 440; ii. 189-192 and Pl. ocliv., 1927.

(1) The inscription on smaller side:

a. אָרָן of. Gen. L. 26:

וַיֵּשֶׁב בְּאָרוֹן כְּמִצְרַיִם

Less cases with article in Heb. poet.

= archaic(?).

b. ה suffix: 3rd, Mass., sing.

e.g. Gen. XII. 8!

= his tent.

c. וְשֵׁת / שֵׁת, to set, whence 'dwelling'!

אָרָן / ז' / פָּעַל / (אָפּ) סָבַעַל^a

(Ippe)sba'al made This : Coffin

בֶּן / אַחֲרָם / מֶלֶךְ / גִּבְעָל

,Gebal of king ,Ahiram of son

לְאַחֲרָם / אִבְנֵה^b / כְּשֶׁחָה^c / כְּעֶלֶם

eternity for his as, father his, Ahiram for habitation

(2) The inscription on the larger side:

a. אָרָן: Aram. Behold! Heb. if, or

although. אָרָן אֵלֶּה? But, can it

be 'Even this'? After all, the

meaning is uncertain.

b. אָרָן Not found in Heb. The translation 'laid out' may fit the case. If אָרָן = אָרָן, it looks like Aram.; but this scarcely can be.

c. אָרָן = אָרָן. cf. Prov. 8: 2.

d. אָרָן Hator = Hathor ?

e. אָרָן = אָרָן Hithp. of אָרָן 'turn': turn over, or, change.

f. אָרָן To strike, therefore, to efface.

g. אָרָן cf. Ps. CXLIX. 6; Isa.

XLI. 15 - אָרָן mouth.

h. אָרָן of. Babyl. arallu = Sheol.

וְאָרָן / מֶלֶךְ / כְּמִצְרַיִם / וְסָבַן^s

of governor & kings of King ?

כְּמִצְרַיִם / וְסָבַן / מִחַנֵּת / עֵלֶי^c / נִגְבָּל^b

over camp the ? — governors (or against)

נִגְבָּל / וְנִגְבָּל / אָרָן / ז' / ז'

this -coffin discovered & Gebal

(or opened)

חֲתָת / אָרָן / חֲתָת / מִשְׁפָּטָה^d / ז'

:judge his Hator, flagstone the under

חֲתָת / אָרָן / כְּמִצְרַיִם / וְנִחַת^e / ז'

,will and his of the over|turned was ,descending king throne (or will be)

חֲתָת / אָרָן / נִגְבָּל / וְסָבַן / ז'

shall whoever and Gebal over away pass efface

אָרָן / אָרָן / ז' / ז'

!Sheol(?) of mouth the to this-inscription

b. Affirmation of the date

It has been pointed out, by Montet and Dussaud, that the Ahiham inscription comes from the thirteenth century B.C. In the first place, it is natural to think that the inscription is contemporary with the sarcophagus, since Ipphesba'al declares he made the sarcophagus. If this had been reemployed and the inscription had been engraved at the time of the second use, then the formula should have been otherwise as in the inscription of King Tabnith. Moreover, as for the evidence that the tomb had been really hewn for this superb sarcophagus, in other words, for Ahiham, the following facts should be pointed out as pertinent:

The honor and adoration offered to Ahiham by his son, Ipphesba'al, certainly suggests that a good tomb was made for the father. On the other hand, the hypogeum V furnished some grand Mycenaean ceramics and also some Cypriote ceramics (bowls with scaled design), the association of all of which characterizes the latter half of the second millenium B.C.¹ The

¹vide Dussaud: *Civilization préhelléniques*, 2nd edit., p. 237-239.

Mycenaeen ceramics are not degenerated, for they show good workmanship. One Mycenaeen ivory also proves that it does not belong to a time later than the second millenium B.C.; for the bull on it bears a close resemblance to the famous cup of Vaphio¹ which was found on the cupola of a tomb. The griffin found on Aegean monuments — such ivories as those of Enkomi found in tombs 17 and 73 — are assigned, by Poulsen, to the period of 12-11th century B.C. But the ivory of Enkomi, which appears on the luxurious boxes made of mirrors, shows a degenerate workmanship, especially, in the treatment of the bulls. Considering this, the one found in Byblos is more ancient than those later ones which it resembles. Moreover, there

1. The ancient site in Laconia, Greece, which is famous for its "bee-hive" tomb, excavated in 1889 by Dr. Tsountas. The contents of the tomb (in the National Museum in Athens) are typical of the "First Late Minoan" period (c. 1500 B.C.) and include engraved gems and amethyst beads, articles in gold, silver, bronze, lead, amber and crystal; also an iron ring, unusual at this early date. By far the first objects are two golden cups with scenes in relief, picturing the capture of bulls. (See J. G. Frazer: *Pausania's Description of Greece*, iii. 135f.)

is complete agreement as to the date of the two alabaster vases with the name Rameses II, found respectively, one in the pit and the other in the funeral chamber.¹ From all these considerations, it is all but certain that the tomb, including both the sarcophagus and the inscription, belongs to the 13th century B.C., perhaps to the latter part of it. Attention is called to the fact, in dating, that tablets found at Tell El-Amarna, Egypt, show that the Egyptian envoy Wenamon gave 500 rolls of papyrus to Zakar-Ba'al of Byblos in part payment for a shipment of cedar wood. This was at the end of the twelfth century B.C. As cuneiform was used only on clay tablet, it would seem that the papyrus was intended either for Egyptian or Phoenician characters. An early use of the alphabet by the Phoenicians may be postulated on this information.²

Together with the Ahiram inscription itself, it is interesting to notice, there has been found in the tomb a simple graffito incised on the wall south of

1. Montet: Syria, 1928, p. 342.

2. vide infra, p. 122f.

the shaft, at the place mid way up. In carefully observing the text, we find that the text had been written to prevent plunderers from violating the tomb; and it can not be ascribed to the violator. It may possibly be the chief of workmen who incised the formula. The similarities of form in the letters of this graffito and the inscription on the sarcophagus are noteworthy, but a different hand doubtlessly executed the engraving.

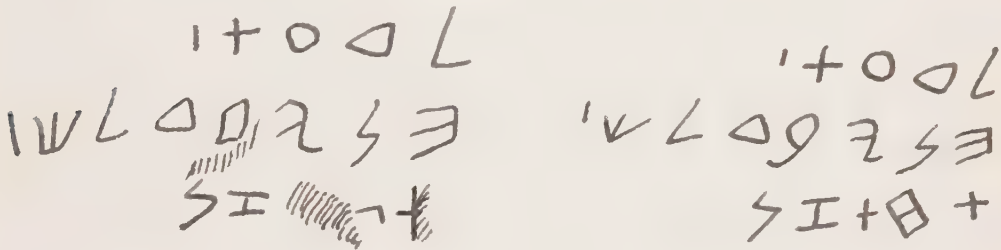


Fig. 18. Copy by P. Montet.

Facsimile by photograph.

/	לֹא יִשָּׁלַח	1
/	אֶת יָדוֹ לְהַחֲרֹב	2
	אֶת הַבַּיִת	3

"Beware!

Behold, thy loss!

Below this!"

c. Queries as to the date of the inscription

The warning graffito on the wall, however, could not stop the greed of a violator or violators. The ground-floor had been plundered when M. Montet reopened it, and this will account for the fact that, together with the Mycenaean vestiges, fragments of Cypriote potteries have been found, characterizing the 7th century B.C., which is perhaps the period of the violation. Now, it is more than certain that the inscription of the hypogeum V do^{not} come down to the latter date. Between the two dates of Rameses II (1350-1225 B.C.) and the 7th century B.C., the former will have to be chosen with greater plausibility as the date of the inscriptions.

Can we, then, imagine that the tomb, hewn out under the reign of Rameses II, was enlarged two or three centuries afterwards, to receive the sarcophagus of Ahiram? We shall see, in studying the style of the text of Abiba'al, that there is such a possibility. If that is so, the period may be put between Rameses II and Sheshonk I: 13-10th century B.C. But the latter date is less probable, because no ceramic evidence proving this date was found buried with the dead.

Coming back to the 13th century B.C. for the date of the Ahiram inscription, do we have confirmatory evidence from the palaeographical point of view?

d. Palaeographical affirmation

With all very

probable archaeological considerations, we had not been able to grasp clearly the antiquity of the Ahiram inscription, until we came to the palaeographical evidence contained in it.

After a short examination, the anteriority of 'Ahiram' to 'Mesha' will become clear enough. To separate words by a vertical bar proves indisputably a high antiquity, and the same method is employed, with the bar more reduced, in the text of Abiba'al which belongs, as we shall see, to the latter part of the 10th century B.C. It is not surprising to find in the stele of Mesha, a little after the middle of the 9th century B.C., a notable progress as to separate words by point, and phrases by vertical line.

Furthermore, the lettering characteristics between

'Ahiram' and 'Mesha' are decisive evidence of the respective stages. In the first place, we marvel at the striking resemblance between the two inscriptions. In the second place, however, differences here and there, slight and yet decisive, cannot be overlooked. For example, the letter 'yay' in the Ahiram inscription generally presents a curve at the bottom of the arrow, and this in a sense is opposite to the form which it takes later. (Y). In like manner, the arrow of 'resh' is inclined to the opposite direction from what it is later found to be. 'Mesha' offers here an intermediate state between the inscription of Ahiram and the Sidonian texts of the Persian period (Tabnith, Eshmun'azar): the arrow is upright.

Ahi <u>r</u> a <u>m</u>	9
Me <u>s</u> ha	4
Sidonian	A

As to the letters such as 'aleph' and 'kaph', it is perceived that the horns and the ⁿfigures are much more different between 'Ahiram' and 'Mesha', than between the latter and the Sidonian texts of the Persian period.

	'aleph'	'kaph'
Ahiram	K K	↘
Mesha	4	↘
Sidonian	X	↘

From the palaeographical point of view, the lapse of four centuries (c.1250-c.850 B.C.), which separates 'Ahiram' and 'Mesha', explains the wide divergencies. In like manner, the characteristics of the text of Abiba'al will account for its being dated one century earlier than 'Mesha'.

More detailed typological and palaeographical considerations will be discussed in PART II.

	Ahram Biblos 13th cent. B.C.	Abiba'al Biblos 10th cent. B.C.	Mesha c. 842 B.C.	Nora 9th cent. B.C.	Kalamu zenjirli 9th cent. B.C.	Barrekoub zenjirli 8th cent. B.C.	CIS, I, 5, 2nd pt. of 8th cent.
𐤀	𐤀	𐤀	𐤀	𐤀	𐤀	𐤀	𐤀
𐤁	𐤁	𐤁	𐤁	𐤁	𐤁	𐤁	𐤁
𐤂	𐤂	𐤂	𐤂	𐤂	𐤂	𐤂	𐤂
𐤃	𐤃	𐤃	𐤃	𐤃	𐤃	𐤃	𐤃
𐤄	𐤄	𐤄	𐤄	𐤄	𐤄	𐤄	𐤄
𐤅	𐤅	𐤅	𐤅	𐤅	𐤅	𐤅	𐤅
𐤆	𐤆	𐤆	𐤆	𐤆	𐤆	𐤆	𐤆
𐤇	𐤇	𐤇	𐤇	𐤇	𐤇	𐤇	𐤇
𐤈	𐤈	𐤈	𐤈	𐤈	𐤈	𐤈	𐤈
𐤉	𐤉	𐤉	𐤉	𐤉	𐤉	𐤉	𐤉
𐤊	𐤊	𐤊	𐤊	𐤊	𐤊	𐤊	𐤊
𐤋	𐤋	𐤋	𐤋	𐤋	𐤋	𐤋	𐤋
𐤌	𐤌	𐤌	𐤌	𐤌	𐤌	𐤌	𐤌
𐤍	𐤍	𐤍	𐤍	𐤍	𐤍	𐤍	𐤍
𐤎	𐤎	𐤎	𐤎	𐤎	𐤎	𐤎	𐤎
𐤏	𐤏	𐤏	𐤏	𐤏	𐤏	𐤏	𐤏
𐤐	𐤐	𐤐	𐤐	𐤐	𐤐	𐤐	𐤐
𐤑	𐤑	𐤑	𐤑	𐤑	𐤑	𐤑	𐤑
𐤒	𐤒	𐤒	𐤒	𐤒	𐤒	𐤒	𐤒
𐤓	𐤓	𐤓	𐤓	𐤓	𐤓	𐤓	𐤓
𐤔	𐤔	𐤔	𐤔	𐤔	𐤔	𐤔	𐤔
𐤕	𐤕	𐤕	𐤕	𐤕	𐤕	𐤕	𐤕
𐤖	𐤖	𐤖	𐤖	𐤖	𐤖	𐤖	𐤖
𐤗	𐤗	𐤗	𐤗	𐤗	𐤗	𐤗	𐤗
𐤘	𐤘	𐤘	𐤘	𐤘	𐤘	𐤘	𐤘
𐤙	𐤙	𐤙	𐤙	𐤙	𐤙	𐤙	𐤙
𐤚	𐤚	𐤚	𐤚	𐤚	𐤚	𐤚	𐤚
𐤛	𐤛	𐤛	𐤛	𐤛	𐤛	𐤛	𐤛
𐤜	𐤜	𐤜	𐤜	𐤜	𐤜	𐤜	𐤜
𐤝	𐤝	𐤝	𐤝	𐤝	𐤝	𐤝	𐤝
𐤞	𐤞	𐤞	𐤞	𐤞	𐤞	𐤞	𐤞
𐤟	𐤟	𐤟	𐤟	𐤟	𐤟	𐤟	𐤟
𐤠	𐤠	𐤠	𐤠	𐤠	𐤠	𐤠	𐤠
𐤡	𐤡	𐤡	𐤡	𐤡	𐤡	𐤡	𐤡
𐤢	𐤢	𐤢	𐤢	𐤢	𐤢	𐤢	𐤢
𐤣	𐤣	𐤣	𐤣	𐤣	𐤣	𐤣	𐤣
𐤤	𐤤	𐤤	𐤤	𐤤	𐤤	𐤤	𐤤
𐤥	𐤥	𐤥	𐤥	𐤥	𐤥	𐤥	𐤥
𐤦	𐤦	𐤦	𐤦	𐤦	𐤦	𐤦	𐤦
𐤧	𐤧	𐤧	𐤧	𐤧	𐤧	𐤧	𐤧
𐤨	𐤨	𐤨	𐤨	𐤨	𐤨	𐤨	𐤨
𐤩	𐤩	𐤩	𐤩	𐤩	𐤩	𐤩	𐤩
𐤪	𐤪	𐤪	𐤪	𐤪	𐤪	𐤪	𐤪
𐤫	𐤫	𐤫	𐤫	𐤫	𐤫	𐤫	𐤫
𐤬	𐤬	𐤬	𐤬	𐤬	𐤬	𐤬	𐤬
𐤭	𐤭	𐤭	𐤭	𐤭	𐤭	𐤭	𐤭
𐤮	𐤮	𐤮	𐤮	𐤮	𐤮	𐤮	𐤮
𐤯	𐤯	𐤯	𐤯	𐤯	𐤯	𐤯	𐤯
𐤰	𐤰	𐤰	𐤰	𐤰	𐤰	𐤰	𐤰
𐤱	𐤱	𐤱	𐤱	𐤱	𐤱	𐤱	𐤱
𐤲	𐤲	𐤲	𐤲	𐤲	𐤲	𐤲	𐤲
𐤳	𐤳	𐤳	𐤳	𐤳	𐤳	𐤳	𐤳
𐤴	𐤴	𐤴	𐤴	𐤴	𐤴	𐤴	𐤴
𐤵	𐤵	𐤵	𐤵	𐤵	𐤵	𐤵	𐤵
𐤶	𐤶	𐤶	𐤶	𐤶	𐤶	𐤶	𐤶
𐤷	𐤷	𐤷	𐤷	𐤷	𐤷	𐤷	𐤷
𐤸	𐤸	𐤸	𐤸	𐤸	𐤸	𐤸	𐤸
𐤹	𐤹	𐤹	𐤹	𐤹	𐤹	𐤹	𐤹
𐤺	𐤺	𐤺	𐤺	𐤺	𐤺	𐤺	𐤺
𐤻	𐤻	𐤻	𐤻	𐤻	𐤻	𐤻	𐤻
𐤼	𐤼	𐤼	𐤼	𐤼	𐤼	𐤼	𐤼
𐤽	𐤽	𐤽	𐤽	𐤽	𐤽	𐤽	𐤽
𐤾	𐤾	𐤾	𐤾	𐤾	𐤾	𐤾	𐤾
𐤿	𐤿	𐤿	𐤿	𐤿	𐤿	𐤿	𐤿

Fig. 19. The Ahiram inscription compared
with others of different
stages.

(4) Biblical Sources

In the Old Testament

no positive evidence is found as to an early use of the alphabet in Palestine. But there are a few, and very interesting passages which suggest a very early use of the alphabet and a very late use of cuneiform writing in Palestine. If such an early date as the period of Judges is obtained for the use of the alphabet in Palestine, the date of the Aḥiram inscription can be by no means too early.

It is quite commonly known through the Tel el-Amarna letters, that the Babylonian cuneiform signs were in use all over Asia Minor and also in Palestine about the 14th century B.C. But there is evidence in the Old Testament that cuneiform characters had been used up to the time of Hezekiah or later. There is one passage in the book of Isaiah, which runs as follows:

וַיִּסְמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי

קֹחַ-לֵךְ נִלְיוֹן נִדְוָל

וּבְחַבּ עָלָיו בְּחַרְטָם אֲנֹכִי

לְמַחֲרָ שֶׁלֵּל חֶסֶד בֵּן :

chap.8:1

What is this 𐤏𐤓𐤕 𐤏𐤓𐤕 ? Our English translation for this is "the pen of a man;" it can also be rendered "the style of people."¹ Presuming that the style of a scribe was the cuneiform writing, "the pen of a man" must be the alphabet.² If such be the case, the tablet incised by Isiah may have appeared, following the style of the Siloam inscription, as follows:



In the circle of archaeologists, it had been claimed by Winckler that the cuneiform characters were used till late in the 8th century B.C.³ This presumption had been kept under doubt till it was attested by Professor Macalister in the excavations at Gezer.⁴ If so, the style of the common people, the Phoenician alphabet, may have been used among the illiterate people, along with the scholarly cuneiform characters.

1. 𐤏𐤓𐤕 is generally used collectively, e.g. Job.vii.7, xv.14; Ps.viii.5; hence, the 'common people', vulgus; cf. $\alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ in Rev.xiii.18, xxi.17; $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\ \alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\varsigma$ in Gal.iii.15.

2. Though not without doubt.

3. Hugo Winckler: Altorientalische Forschungen III, 1902, 165-174.

4. R. A. Stewart Macalister: Excavation of Gezer, 1912.

Its use on coins might be urged as an example.¹ While these scripts were used side by side, the Jewish people were gradually awakened to a nationalistic consciousness, a magnificent beam of which may be represented by the 'First Isaiah.' Over against the servile subjection to the Assyrian cuneiform, the use of 'the pen of a man' is earnestly urged. **בחרט אנוש! בחרט אנוש!** Initiated, seemingly, by Amos and Hosea, this 'Pen of a Man' movement of Isaiah, so to speak, culminated at last in the Deuteronomistic movement² under Josiah (621 B.C.) when, perhaps, the cuneiform influence may have totally ceased.

The most important point in our search is how far up this bilingual state can be traced in Palestine. The inscription of 'Mesha' generally known as the Moabite stone, was found beyond the Jordan about 850 B.C. to which period the Jahvistic document is generally ascribed. One hundred years later, the first written prophecy of Amos of Tekoa, perhaps in alphabetic

1. Benzinger: S. 177; Realencyklopaedie, Bd. 17, S. 789 ff.

2. 2K. XXII., XXIII.; Realencyklopaedie, Bd. 17, S. 178.

writing, was found with its flowing style, ringing with the gospel of 'the pen of a man' and thundering in an avalanche of justice.

A boy of Succoth Far up in the time of the judges, it is said in the Book of Judges, that when Gideon seized a certain young man of Succoth, the boy wrote down for Gideon the names of the princes of Succoth and the belders thereof - seventy and seven men. (Judges VIII.14). Our English R.V. renders "described", in stead of "wrote"; and gives the latter in the notes. Did he really write, or merely described by mouth? The original is כננ'ו. As no other reading has ever been given, there is hardly any room for doubt about the text, were it not that the whole book of Judges has suffered several revisions by later hands. There may be a bit of truth in the narrative, though the kind of script which the boy may have used is far from being known. In the Amarna period, any petty king could keep his own scribe for the task of cuneiform writing.¹ Ordinary people were far from mastering the

1. Benzinger: Hebraeische Archaeologie, S. 185. Gressmann: ZATW, XLII, 1924, S. 292ff.

use of the elaborate method of writing. This had been true till so late that even at the time of Isaiah, the prophet had to be warned by Yahweh to get rid of the scribal habit of the day and to use 'the pen of a man.' In view of these considerations, the lad of Succoth scarcely could have used the cuneiform writing. Had the young man of Succoth used the alphabet, and the warriors of Israel, not scribes, read it; then, a wide use of the Phoenician alphabet among the north Semites at the time of the judges all over the regions of Palestine, both beyond and west of Jordan, can well be assumed. But no definite conclusion can be drawn from the text.

Kiriath- The name קִרְיַת-שֵׁפֶר attracts our
Sepher attention. This had been read 'city
of books' by the LXX (πόλις γραμμάτων), the Vulgate
(*civitas litterarum*), and by the Targum (קִרְיַת אֶרְכִי -
archive-town). Various explanations of the name,
as that of Sayce, have been current among scholars.
In advance of any discussion, however, it must be
remembered that the word קִרְיַת, meaning 'missive,'

'document,' 'writing,' or 'book,' is probably an ancient word borrowed from the Assyrian 'šipru,' meaning missive or message.¹ According to Sayce, it was 'the literary centre of the Canaanite in the South of Palestine,' whilst Debir, i.e., 'the sanctuary' was 'the temple wherein its library was established.'² If this was the case, Derir must have been the religious capital of Canaan; but of this we have no evidence whatever. It may be an alteration of some half-Hebrew name, such as Kirjath-sephur, 'enclosed city.'³ If it were at all the case that Kirjath-sepher, as the etymology suggests, had been the 'city of archives,' no early evidence of the use of the alphabet has so far been found there.

The Song of Deborah Hitherto, no decisive evidence has been found as to the use of an alphabet in Palestine during the time of the judges. We wonder, however, in what script the Song of Deborah

1. Fr. Delitzsch: Heb. & Assy. Wörterbuch, 683; BDB Heb. Lexicon, 706; Tel. Am. šipru, šipirtu, id. Wkl., Tel. Am. Gloss.

2. Sayce:

3. Cf. Assy. Supûru = 'an enclosure with walls.'

was originally written. Most probably not in the cuneiform! In what then? Naturally, in an alphabet. Just when it was first written is unknown, though the authorship is generally ascribed to a contemporary. It seems probable that the Phoenician alphabet had been introduced among the Canaanites about the time of the invasion of the Israelites into Palestine, though the use of it by the latter must have been only after they had mingled with the former. From every appearance, the reign of David may be assumed as the most reasonable period for the introduction of the alphabet among the Israelites by conscious effort; then comes the magnificent reign of Solomon, and then, at last, the period of Amos and Hosea — the brilliant morning of written prophecy.

No decisive evidence as to the early use of alphabetic writing among the Israelites is obtainable in the Old Testament; only a slight suggestion of its early use among the Canaanites. If the latter could be proved as a fact, there would be no reason to doubt the date of the Ahiiram inscription because of its priority to any other inscription.

Having traced up to the thirteenth century B.C. for the earliest inscription written in the Phoenician alphabet, the question which naturally arises is whether an alphabetic inscription dating earlier than that of Ahiiram can be found. The excavations by Messrs. Schaeffer and Chenet in the Tell of Ras Shamra have recently brought to light the existence of a cuneiform alphabet a century earlier than the Ahiiram inscription. This is what is now known as the alphabet of Ras Shamra. A few pages will be devoted to this script.

(5) The Alphabet of Ras Shamra

The cuneiform tablets which we are now taking up, were found by the French excavators, F.A. Schaeffer and G. Chenet, in May, 1929, at the Tell of Ras Shamra (i.e. 'fennel-cape'), some 13 km. north of Ladikiyeh (Fr. Lattaouié; Ger.: Ladikiye), and less than one km. from the sea close by the natural harbor, Minet el-baida (i.e. the white harbor). By the picks of the excavators a number of interesting vestiges of the vanished city were uncovered. One edifice, destroyed in the past by conflagration, afforded fragments of Egyptian inscriptions and one group of clay tablets upon which a new cuneiform writing other than the Babylonian appeared. This same writing was again found on five hatchets or adzes that made a part of one deposit of utensils and weapons found by Schaeffer: "4 swords, 2 daggers, 27 hatchet blades, 11 lances, 3 arrow heads, 6 shears, 4 small billhooks, 2 ingots of bronze, and one tripod decorated all around with pendants of grenadier flowers."

Beside the cuneiform tablets written in the as yet unknown system, there were also found some tablets

Date of the written in genuine Babylonian.

New Writing They are few in number, and comprehend some vocabularies, syllables, and lists of divinities,"¹ and especially "two letters that, both in language and style, are similar to the letters of el-Amarna."² Charles Virolleaud, then the editor of *Syria*, analysed and made a good copy of them in pl.LXXVI-LXXVII.³ The whole of the objects found, and the presence, among the texts, of the letters of the el-Amarna type, all point to the 14th century B.C. as the date of the tablets of Ras Shamra.

The cuneiform Virolleaud also published in

Alphabet the same issue, the tablets of the new writing (pl.LXI-LXXV), which are 48 in number, more or less fragmentary. The most interesting fact about this script is that it is a very simplified system of writing, more simplified than that of the

1. F. A. Schaeffer: *Syria*, 1929, tome X, 4, p. 304.

2. *ibid.*, p. 304.

3. *Les tablettes de Ras Shamra*, 1929.

Persian inscriptions of the Archemenides, which is composed of 44 signs. Hardly more than 26 or 27 signs appeared in the whole texts of Ras Shamra. The key to the decipherment of this writing was rightly given by Virolleaud in *Syria*, Sept. 1929. Subsequently Bauer published, in August, 1930, an excellent work on the decipherment of the whole tablets with brief but valuable notes.¹ Virolleaud obtained his clue in the following manner. He remarked that the shortest text, composed of six signs, are reproduced on four hatchets found in the deposit; and that, on the fifth, it was "preceded by one word of four letters." This word was presumed to designate "the object upon which it was inscribed."²(p. 307). The text that recurred on the five objects, he says, should have been the name of the person to whom they belonged. The same group of letters preceded by the bar of separation recurred at the beginning of one of the 48 tablets, namely, no. 18; and also one

2.     - cf. Bauer: Entzifferung, p. 7;
Siloam Inscr.; Deut. XIX, 5; XX, 19; Is. X, 15; IK. VI, 7.

1. Bauer, Hans: Entzifferung der Keilschrifttafeln von Ras Shamra, Halle, 1930.

very frequently employed sign was that which appeared to correspond to the Akkadian preposition ana='to' (?) (p.306 f.), the Phoenician value of which is l(lamed).¹ Thus the foundation of decipherment was laid by Virolleaud. Using the same clue Bauer was able to develop his excellent work of decipherment in a few days.² The language of the text shows certain peculiarities that indicate a special dialect. It corresponds, however, in many cases to the Phoenician forms and words,³ though there are also a number of foreign terms used in the text. The whole system forms an alphabet consisting of some 27 signs. Each sign is discussed with scholarly precision by Bauer, the result of whose work is arranged in alphabetical order as follows:⁴

1. Against this an objection is raised by a French scholar at Jerusalem, whose name is P. Dhorme, in *Revue Biblique*, Oct. 1930, p. 573, also Jan. 1931.

2. Bauer: *Entzifferung*, p. 3.

3. The following words are taken by Bauer as practically established in his decipherment: *l, šlšt, 'strt, b'l, 3rb', bn, grzn, b'lm, mlk, khnm, 3lh, 3ht, 3hd, w, w̄, zqn, yd't*, etc. On the other hand, it is puzzling to Bauer that a group of old Canaanitic words which might be expected in this sort of inscription are missing: *שלום, נפש, שמים, יום, שמש, ארץ, עבד, אלה, שמע, חנה, טוב, ברך*. (cf. Bauer: *Entzifferung*, p. 9).

4. Bauer: p. 14f.

1.	$\text{š} = \text{'}$		Example:	$\text{מר} = \text{'mr}$		2	passim
2.	$\bar{\text{š}} = \text{ṣ}$		"	$\text{אשרת} = \text{ṣrt}$		16	
3.	$\text{b} = \text{b}$		"	$\text{בעל} = \text{b' l}$		17	
4.	$\text{g} = \text{g}$		"	$\text{גרנ} = \text{grzn}$		(Inscr. on a hatchet)	
5.	$\bar{\text{g}} = \text{ḡ}$		"	$\text{גל} = \text{ḡal}$		12 : 1	
6.	$\text{d} = \text{d}$		"	$\text{דגן} = \text{dgn}$		19 : 5	
7.	$\text{h} = \text{h}$		"	$\text{לה} = \text{lh}$		3 : 14	
8.	$\text{v} = \text{v}$		"	$\text{שוכן} = \text{šukn}$		1 : 3	
9.	$\bar{\text{v}} = \text{ṽ}$		"	$\text{ותן} = \text{vytn}$		18 : 19	
10.	$\text{z} = \text{z}$		"	$\text{ערך} = \text{'zrk}$		1 : 21	
11.	$\text{h} = \text{h}$		"	$\text{חדש} = \text{hds}$		3 : 48	
12.	$\bar{\text{h}} = \text{ḥ}$		"	$\text{זבח} = \text{ḥbh}$		3 : 47	
13.	$\text{y} = \text{y}$		"	$\text{ידע'ת} = \text{yad't}$		6 : 10	
14.	$\text{k} = \text{k}$		"	$\text{כהנם} = \text{khnem}$		2 : 10	
15.	$\text{l} = \text{l}$		"	$\text{לבו} = \text{lbw}$		32 : 4	
16.	$\text{m} = \text{m}$		"	$\text{מלך} = \text{mlk}$		18 :	
17.	$\text{n} = \text{n}$		"	$\text{ענת} = \text{'nt}$		3 : 16	
18.	'		"	$\text{עשתרת} = \text{'strt}$		5 : 1	
19.	$\text{g} = \text{g}$		"	$\text{זערן} = \text{zgrn}$		8 : 50	
20.	$\text{p} = \text{p}$		"	$\text{פלן} = \text{pln}$		10 : 8	
21.	$\bar{\text{p}} = \text{ḫ}$		"	$\text{גפון} = \text{ḡḫwn}$		12 : 11	
22.	$\text{q} = \text{q}$		"	$\text{זקן} = \text{zqn}$		9 : 7	

23. $\gamma = r = \text{---}$ Example: $\gamma\gamma\gamma\gamma = \gamma\gamma\gamma' = \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \Delta 12:3$
24. $w = s = \star$ " $\gamma\gamma\gamma\gamma = slhn = \star \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \Delta \text{---} 13:passim$
25. $n = t = \text{---}$ " $\gamma\gamma\gamma\gamma = uttn = \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \text{---} \Delta 32:5$
26. $? = ? = \text{---}$
27. $? = ? = \text{---}$

Bauer, to prove that his decipherment was in the right direction, gives the following words based upon the phonetic values established by him: (p.6)

Friday (Astarte) 5:1

כהן (priest) 2:11; 2:18

N.B. "Wichtiger Nachtrag" at the end of Bauer's
"Entzifferung" -----

Immediately after Bauer had concluded his book, R.P.P. Dhorme sent to him from Jerusalem the proof-sheet of his article on the new inscription, which appeared in Revue Biblique, Oct. 1930,* entitled, "Un nouvel alphabet sémitique." Therein are deciphered, k instead of Bauer's w, p instead of q (cf. Bauer, S. 7), m instead of k, and the second s instead of m. If so, the following words are missing: 3nk = "I" (13:7, 8), ml3k smm = angel of Heaven and mlk smm = king of Heaven (6:25-27), and furthermore, the god 𐤎𐤍𐤕 and several items of page 9 in Bauer's work. Moreover, an awkward nominal suffix (𐤍) is deciphered by Dhorme, which does not exist in the West Semitic, e.g., 3ls instead of 𐤎𐤕𐤍, b'ls instead of 𐤁𐤕𐤍 (9:6). The circumstance invites further search.

* More fully in Jan., 1931.

As it is seen in this list, the four letters, namely, D, D, 3, W are missing. When we at all assume the unintelligible signs (𐎠 and 𐎡) as taking the place of some of these letters, the use of these consonants remains, at all events, less exact than other signs. 12 out of 27 signs are identical in form with the Babylonian and the derivative Hittite cuneiform, as they appeared about the 14th century B.C.; they are as follows:

1. 𐎠 (t) = Baby. aš (Del.¹ Nr.1)
2. 𐎡 (3) = " hal (Del. Nr.2)
3. 𐎢 (n) = Hit. eš (Delap.² Nr.3)
4. 𐎣 (g) = Baby. be (Del. Nr.44)
5. 𐎤 (?) = " nu (Del. Nr.51, very common in Hit.; missing in Delap.)
6. 𐎥 (k) = Hit. ga (Delap. Nr.61)
7. 𐎦 (h) = Baby. ti (Del. Nr.48)
8. 𐎧 (q) = " tab (Del. Nr.90)
9. 𐎨 (g) = " diš (Del. Nr.279)
10. 𐎩 (z) = " num.2 (Del. Nr.318)
11. 𐎪 (p) = " šá (Del. Nr.330)
12. 𐎫 (b) = " sik (Del. Nr.272)

1. Delitzsch: Assyrische Lesestücke, 4. Aufl., S. 120 ff.

2. Delaporte: Syllabaire hittite cuneiforme.

That these 12 signs are retaining their typological identity with the original Babylonian or Hittite cuneiform, and yet, have totally different phonetic values deserves consideration. What has been, then, the motive of the invention, and hence, the underlying principle of the system, and, in a wider sense, the environment in which this cuneiform alphabet originated?

The environment The motive for the invention,
of the invention and hence, the principle involved in the system is, in a word, not certain. It can be supposed, however, that the inventor of the alphabet knew so little of the genuine cuneiform system, or that he knew it all, but well; and intentionally, for some reason or other, did not follow it. As for the evidences of the latter, it can be referred to two considerations, firstly, different as the phonetic values are, 12 out of 27 signs are slavish borrowings from the Babylonian and Hittite cuneiform, and secondly, five signs are extracts of the chief element in the cuneiform character—𐎶, 𐎶, 4, 𐎶, 𐎶.¹ This

1. Bauer: Entzifferung, p. 15.

is likely to show that the inventor or the borrower knew very well what to choose. For all that, the manner of using the cuneiform is quite arbitrary considered from the side of the original. Presuming that the proto-Semitic alphabet, whether it be the Sinai alphabet or whatever else, had already been established at that time, we can, not without reason, suppose that this cuneiform alphabet was patterned after it. At that time of the el-Amarna period cuneiform writing predominated to the exclusion of every other script, because it was regarded as the scholarly method of writing; a good example is found in the Amarna letters. Between 1500-1200 B.C. there were cuneiform scribes in several Hittite towns in Asia Minor, in nearly every important city in Syria and Palestine, and at the Egyptian court. Phoenicia, of course, must have been within touch of this influence. The more educated peoples might have felt it humiliating to use such a simple script as that of Sinai or even of Ahiram; and yet, they came to regard the alphabet to be the most convenient and the simplest

Doublings of Consonantal Sounds

Phoen.	Ras Shamra	Example	Nr.
ס	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{𐤑} = \text{ס} = ' \\ \text{𐤒} = \text{ס} = \text{ס} \end{array} \right.$	$\begin{array}{l} \text{סרס} \\ \text{סרסרס} \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{l} 2 \text{ passim} \\ 16 \end{array}$
ג	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{𐤓} = \text{ג} = \text{ג} \\ \text{𐤔} = \text{ג} = \text{ג} \end{array} \right.$	$\begin{array}{l} \text{גרג} \\ \text{גרג} \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{l} \text{Inscr. on the ax} \\ 12:1 \end{array}$
ו	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{𐤕} = \text{ו} = \text{ו or ו} \\ \text{𐤖} = \text{ו} = \text{ו or ו} \end{array} \right.$	$\begin{array}{l} \text{ווכו} \\ \text{ווכו} \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{l} 13 \\ 18:19 \end{array}$
ח	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{𐤗} = \text{ח} = \text{ח} \\ \text{𐤘} = \text{ח} = \text{ח} \end{array} \right.$	$\begin{array}{l} \text{חחח} \\ \text{חחח} \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{l} 3:48 \\ 3:47 \end{array}$
ע	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{𐤙} = \text{ע} = \text{ע} \\ \text{𐤚} = \text{ע} = \text{ע} \end{array} \right.$	$\begin{array}{l} \text{עעע} \\ \text{עעע} \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{l} 5:1 \\ 3:50 \end{array}$
פ	$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{𐤛} = \text{פ} = \text{פ} \\ \text{𐤜} = \text{פ} = \text{פ} \end{array} \right.$	$\begin{array}{l} \text{פלפ} \\ \text{פלפ} \end{array}$	$\begin{array}{l} 10:3 \\ 12:11 \end{array}$

In Arabic there are several of letters which were added later to distinguish similar sounds; namely, τ and τ' , χ and χ' , etc; in the Southern Group such is also the case. Now, the question of the 'doubles'

must be taken up together with the origin of the Semitic alphabet. Herein lies a serious problem pertaining to the whole topic. There is a general agreement that the names of the Arabic and Ethiopic letters not found in Hebrew are merely suggestions of the sound and have no special meaning; hence not only the sign but also the name seems to be of more recent origin, at a time when a desire was felt for differentiation in script as well as in pronunciation. This must not be misunderstood to mean that the new sounds happened to arise in later times. In ancient times when differentiation of closely related sounds was in use among the people, one sign could stand for two or more related sounds, the correct pronunciation depending on the knowledge of the language, very much as with us in the use of *th*. In the course of time confusion arose, which led to modifications of the single sign. If this principle of evolution holds good for every case, it follows that the alphabet of Ras Shamra was preceded by a simpler proto-alphabet such as the Phoenician. Inferring from the palaeo-

graphical maturity of the Ahiramic alphabet as well as from the above assumption, we presume the alphabet of Ras Shamra to have been preceded by a proto-'Phoenician alphabet' which existed before the Ahiram-script.

Judging by the abruptness with which our cuneiform alphabet emerged from the line of development of the North Semitic alphabet, I am induced to think that it was merely a local phenomenon.

Summary:

Summing up the foregoing discussions, the following conclusions are obtained:

1. No sound evidence has ever been found of the origin of the Phoenician alphabet either in Cypriote or Cretan scripts, tempting as the speculation regarding the latter is.

2. The earliest inscription ever found in the Phoenician alphabet is the Ahiram inscription dating from the 13th century B.C.

3. Judging from the palaeographical maturity of the lettering of the Ahiram inscription, the earlier existence of the Phoenician alphabet can be assumed with confidence.

4. The alphabet of Ras Shamra partly accounts for the foregoing assumption.

5. The alphabet of Ras Shamra, by internal evidence, namely, a group of the doubles of the sign, and other considerations, presupposes a preceding alphabet.

6. Considering the fact that Phoenicia hardly comes into history proper before c. 1600 B.C.¹, the highest date for the introduction of alphabet into Phoenicia can not be much beyond that limit.

7. The remaining question for us is where did the Phoenician alphabet originate? Was it invented in Phoenicia proper, or introduced from somewhere else?

1. In this period the Egyptian empire began to extend in the direction of Asia under Ahmosi (Amasis) I; he carried his arms into Syria, and conquered at least Palestine and Phoenicia, the latter being the country called Da-hi on the Egyptian monuments (Müller, *As. u. Eur.*, p. 181). Thothmos III (1508-1449) repeated and consolidated the earlier conquest, and established Egyptian suzerainty over all the petty states of Syria and Phoenicia. For the civilization of Canaan about 1400 B.C. we have valuable evidence in the Egyptian papyrus Anastasi I, which mentions Kepuna (Gubna, Gebel-Byblos) the holy city and others.

It will be in order for us to turn our attention to the Sinai-script which is roughly dated between 2000-1600 B.C. Before entering into this most interesting search, the Babylonian-Assyrian hypothesis may be appropriately discussed in connection with the alphabet of Ras Shamra.

II. BABYLONIAN-ASSYRIAN HYPOTHESIS

The theories represented by scholars¹ such as Saalschütz(1838), Deecke(1877), Delitzsch(1893), Hommel(1925), and others, scarcely need to be mentioned in details, because all morphological attempts to connect the origin of the Semitic alphabet with the Babylonian Assyrian cuneiform are likely to be failures. This hypothesis, if anything is to be expected therefrom, has to be reconsidered in the light of the alphabet of Ras Shamra, which is essentially different from the so-called cuneiform. Hommel² is of the opinion that the names of the letters of the alphabet represent the symbols of the planets and the zodiacal signs ('ayin "eye" = sun; yod "arm" = Mercury; mim "water" = water-carrier, etc.), and that the order of the letters related to the Chaldean astrology. Eliminating the letters *beth*, *teth*, *sade*, and *qoph*, he assumes the *Uralphabet* to be as follows:

1. vide Jensen: *Geschichte der Schrift*, 1925, p. 101-102.

2. *Grundriss der Geographie und Geschichte des alten Orients*, 1904; p. 96ff., republished in *Äthnologie und Geographie des alten Orients*, 1925, p. 96ff.

Aleph(Stier)
Bê(Haus) } Einleitung

Gimel(Waffe)

Dalet(Thor)

Hê'(Himmel)

Wâw(Zwillingsdrache)

Zaw, Zai(Zwillinge)

Lamed(Pflugschar,
Ochsenstachel)

Mîm(Wasser)

Nûn(Fisch)

Samek(Himmel)

Jod(Arm)

Kaph(hohle Hand)

‘Ajin(Auge)

Pi(Mund)

Resh(Kopf)

Schluss:

{ Šîn(REgen)
{ Tau(Kreuz)

The order begins with the bull representing the moon-god with his spouse, the personified "night-hut," etc. Zimmern¹ elaborated the theory in a different manner; then, followed Peiser² who held that the Assyrian characters had already a settled order before the time

1. Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung des Alphabets, in ZDMG 50, 667f, 1896.

2. Das Prinzip der assyrischen Zeichenordnung, in Zeitschr. für Assyriologie I, 95f.

of Tell el-Amarna. Zimmern believed that he could prove that the order of the letters of the Phoenician alphabet corresponded to that of the cuneiform, which really could not be done; this is shown in the following:

Cuneiform signs		Phoenician letters	
1	<i>mu</i>	13	<i>mê^m</i> 'water'
17	<i>nûⁿnu</i>	14	<i>nûⁿn</i> 'fish'
42	<i>êⁿu</i>	16	<i>‘ayⁱn</i> 'eye'
51	1) <i>pû^u</i>	17	<i>pê^e</i> 'mouth'
	2) <i>sinⁿnu</i>	21	<i>sîⁿn</i> 'tooth'
52	<i>reš^u</i>	20	<i>rêš^u</i> 'head'
105	<i>al^pu</i>	1	<i>ale^ph</i> 'ox'
140	1) <i>ia^du</i>	10	<i>yô^da</i> 'hand'
	2) <i>ka^ppu</i>	11	<i>ka^ph</i> 'palm'
147	<i>bî^tu</i>	2	<i>bê^th</i> 'house'
155	<i>da^ltu</i>	4	<i>dâ^leth</i> 'door'

All these older theories have to be reconsidered in the light of the recent discovery of the alphabet of Ras Shamra. We have already ascertained that in the alphabet of Ras Shamra, the manner of borrowing the cuneiform characters from the Babylonian and the Hittite is arbitrary, and that there is no common

relationship with the latter in phonetic value. Had there been at that time any alphabet directly derived from the cuneiform, it would be strange that no phonetic similarity can be found. From various considerations it is most probable that the alphabet of Ras Shamra was merely a local practice patterned after the already existing normal Semitic alphabet. Why this cuneiform alphabet cannot reasonably be the proto-alphabet has already been discussed.¹ Again, we find that there is nothing in common in form and sound between the alphabet of Ras Shamra and of the Behistun inscription of Darius I.² Some scholars affirm that the Persian alphabet must have been known before the time of Darius I, the Great, but there is no definite proof of this.³ All the inscriptions extant in this cuneiform alphabet are royal, and there is no literary or commercial document so written still existing. This is more likely to show that the old Persian cuneiform alphabet was not commonly used, and that it was invented from the Babylonian syllables about or little before the time of the

1. Supra, p. 77-84.

2. Supra, p. 71-72.

3. Carried over to the bottom of the next page(*).

Behistun inscription. It is only during late period of the old Persian alphabet that the more or less direct borrowing, both in the form and the sound, from the cuneiform syllables had been made; and yet, it is not the Semitic alphabet. We must be warned¹ against thinking that a group of syllables is likely to be developed into an alphabet. On the contrary, a syllable rather presents an obstacle to the process of conversion into a consonant. Is it not surprising that the 12 Babylonian and Hittite syllables utilized in the alphabet of Ras Shamra are assigned totally different consonantal values?

In short, the Babylonian-Assyrian hypothesis is at present in a state of obsolescence, and more so, not alone on account of the discovery of the Sinai-inscriptions, but also through the discovery of the Alphabet of Ras Shamra.²

1. Supra, p. 21.

2. Bauer: Entzifferung der Keilschrifttafeln von Ras Shamra, 1930, p. 15.

* Cf. Hommel: Ethnologie und Geographie des alten Orients, 1925, p. 202, "Diese Schrift ist nun nicht etwa eine Vereinfachung aus der babylonischen-assyrischen Schrift, sondern offenbar ein in Keilzeichen umgesetztes Kursivalphabet, und zwar hat es allen Anschein, als ob das zugrunde liegende Alphabet dasselbe war, was auch die Vorlage der indischen Schrift bildete, etc."

Hieratic	Phoen.	Hieratic	Phoen.
Ⲁ	ⲁ	Ⲃ	ⲃ
Ⲅ	ⲅ	Ⲇ	ⲇ
Ⲉ	ⲉ	Ⲋ	ⲋ
Ⲍ	ⲍ	Ⲏ	ⲏ
Ⲑ	ⲑ	Ⲓ	ⲓ
ⲕ	Ⲕ	Ⲗ	ⲗ
ⲙ	Ⲏ	Ⲙ	ⲏ
Ⲛ	Ⲑ	ⲛ	ⲑ
Ⲝ	Ⲓ	ⲝ	ⲓ
Ⲟ	Ⲕ	ⲟ	ⲕ
Ⲡ	Ⲗ	ⲡ	ⲏ
Ⲣ	Ⲙ	ⲣ	ⲑ
Ⲥ	Ⲛ	ⲥ	ⲓ
ⲧ	Ⲝ	Ⲧ	ⲕ
ⲩ	Ⲟ	Ⲩ	ⲏ

Fig. 20. Cf. the Theory of de Rouge.

Old Semitic	Hieroglyph
𐤀	𐤁
𐤂	𐤃
𐤄	𐤅
𐤆	𐤇
𐤈	𐤉
𐤊	𐤋
𐤌	𐤍
𐤎	𐤏
𐤑	𐤒
𐤓	𐤔
𐤕	𐤖
𐤗	𐤘
𐤙	𐤚
𐤛	𐤜
𐤝	𐤞
𐤟	𐤠
𐤡	𐤢
𐤣	𐤤
𐤥	𐤦
𐤧	𐤨
𐤩	𐤪
𐤫	𐤬
𐤭	𐤮
𐤯	𐤰
𐤱	𐤲
𐤳	𐤴
𐤵	𐤶
𐤷	𐤸
𐤹	𐤺
𐤻	𐤼
𐤽	𐤾
𐤿	𐥀
𐥁	𐥂
𐥃	𐥄
𐥅	𐥆
𐥇	𐥈
𐥉	𐥊
𐥋	𐥌
𐥍	𐥎
𐥏	𐥐
𐥑	𐥒
𐥓	𐥔
𐥕	𐥖
𐥗	𐥘
𐥙	𐥚
𐥛	𐥜
𐥝	𐥞
𐥟	𐥠
𐥡	𐥢
𐥣	𐥤
𐥥	𐥦
𐥧	𐥨
𐥩	𐥪
𐥫	𐥬
𐥭	𐥮
𐥯	𐥰
𐥱	𐥲
𐥳	𐥴
𐥵	𐥶
𐥷	𐥸
𐥹	𐥺
𐥻	𐥼
𐥽	𐥾
𐥿	𐥿

Fig. 21. Cf. the theory of Halévy.

III. EGYPTO-SINAITIC HYPOTHESIS

Since the discovery of the Sinai inscriptions, no scholar feels it admissible to ascribe the origin of Semitic alphabet directly to Egypt.¹ The 'hieratic origin' had been assumed by Lenormant² and de Rouge.² Over against this view, the 'hieroglyphic origin' was assumed by Halévy³ who affirmed that half of the Phoenician letters can be connected with Egyptian hieroglyphs.

No more constructive discussion could be looked for in this direction until the Sinaitic script had been found. As this is one of the biggest topics of the recent epigraphic discussions, an extended discussion, on the basis of this script, is offered in the following:

SINAI-ALPHABET

1. The Rise of the Problem

In 1906 Sir Flinders

Petrie published his *Researches in Sinai*, giving an account

1. Cf. Lidzbarski: *Ephemeris* I 261ff.

2. *Essai sur la propagation de l'alphabet phenicien*, p. 85ff.

3. Halévy: *Mélanges d'épigraphie et l'archéologie Semitiques*, 1874, p. 168ff.; *Revue Semitique* 9 (1901) p. 356ff., et al.

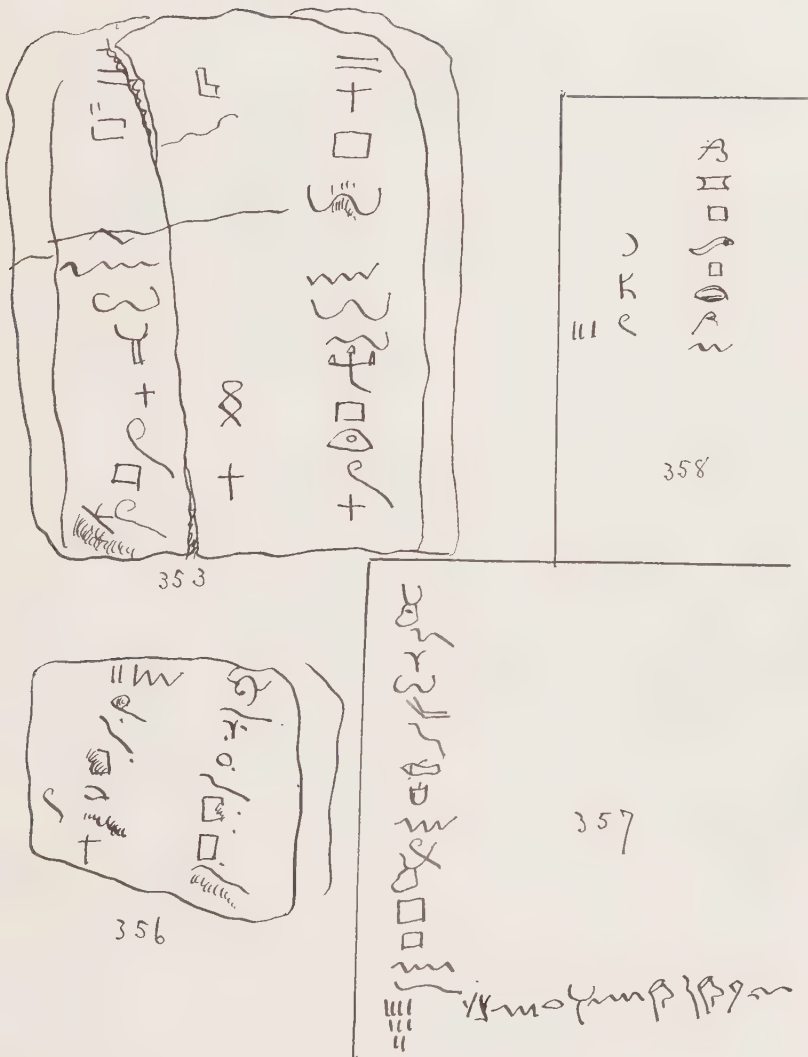


Fig.22-a. Sinai Inscriptions(After Butin).

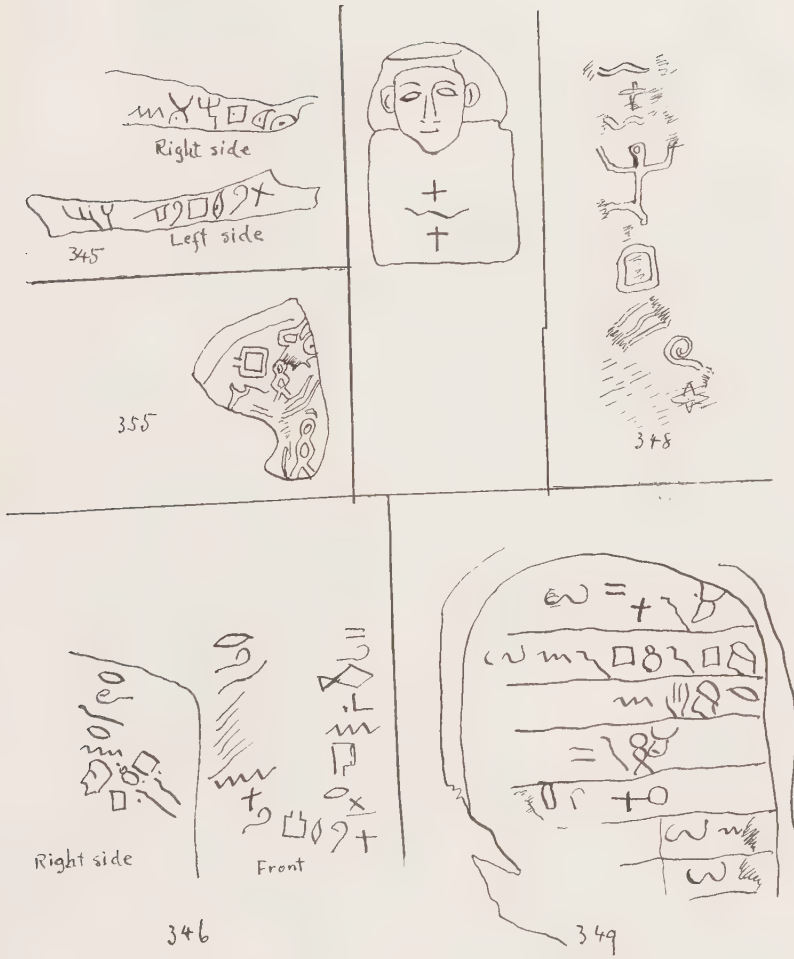


Fig. 22-b.

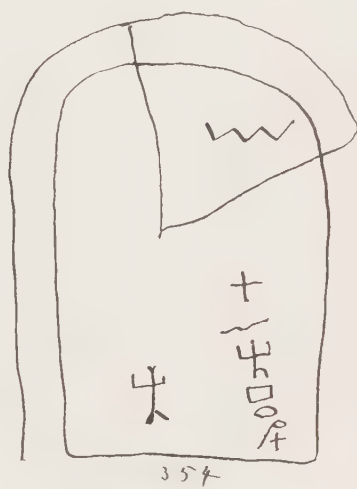
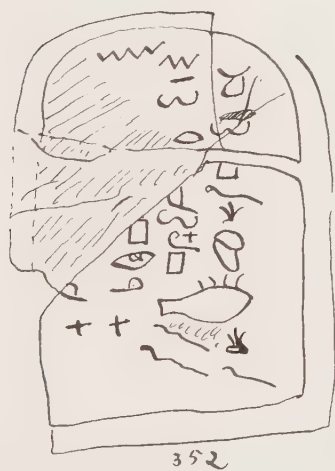
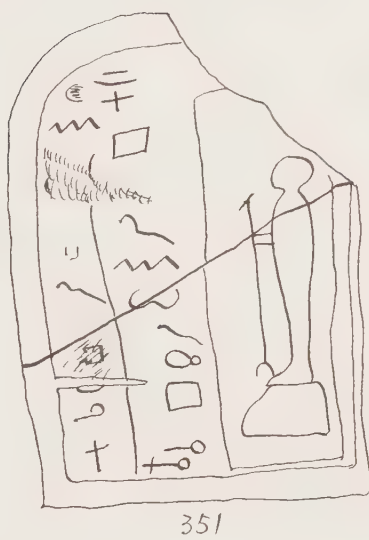
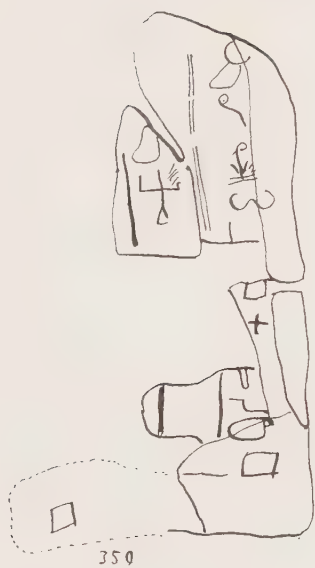


Fig. 22-0.

(pp.129ff.) of some "inscriptions in unknown characters" found at Serâbît el-Khadîm. The characters resembled Egyptian but were meaningless when interpreted as Egyptian. Meanwhile, some ten years had passed. The inscriptions were published by Alan H. Gardiner and T. Eric Peet in *The Inscriptions of Sinai*, London, 1917. This volume gave first, all the Egyptian inscriptions on Mt. Serabit (nos. 1-344), and then those "in a new foreign script" (nos. 345-355). It is to the latter that the name "Sinai-Alphabet" is applied. Of these, nos. 345-347 came from the Temple of Hathor; and 345 (a sphinx) is now in the British Museum (41788), 346 (an inscribed statuette) in the Egyptian Museum at Cairo (38268), 347 (another statue) in the Musée du Cinquantenaire at Brussels. No. 348 had been seen by Palmer in 1869 in the Wady Maghareh, some twenty miles from Serâbît, and was first published by Weill¹ from a squeeze taken by Palmer. The other fragments of nos. 349-355 were seen by Petrie at the entrance to Mine L on Mt. Serâbît, which had been carried over to

1. R. Weill: *Inscriptions Egyptiennes du Sinai*, Paris, 1904.

Suez by Professors Lake and Blake,¹ and are now with the exception of Gardiner's 355 at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. They added three new ones in all. One of them is a new fragment which Professor Butin proposes to number 356. There follows a long inscription in Mine L, and the two short ones in Mine M receive the numbers 357 and 358 respectively. These last two are still at Serabit. The total number is, therefore, 345-358.

Petrie, the first finder, offered no further suggestion as to the language of the inscriptions beyond stating that it was not Egyptian; but while Gardiner was engaged in preparing his Corpus, the thought struck him that it was Semitic and displayed the evolution of Egyptian hieroglyphs into a Semitic alphabet. If this be really the case, the principle of 'acrophony'² had probably been applied. Following up this clue Gardiner came to the conclusion that a certain group of signs was to be read as $\text{N} \text{Y} \text{U} \text{L}$ - $\square \bigcirc \rho +$ which he found in

1. In the expedition of 1927 by Professors Lake and Blake, the purpose of which was primarily to study the manuscripts in the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mt. Sinai.

2. Acrophony is the principle followed when the hieroglyphs (representing things) are converted into signs (representing sounds) by giving to each hieroglyph the value of the initial consonantal A sound in the name of the thing represented.

several places in these inscriptions. This suggestion has for the most part found acceptance. If the word 𐤀𐤋𐤍 represents "goddess", it seems not inappropriate in a place just opposite the temple of Hathor.

Gardiner developed his view and published his results in an article, 'The Egyptian Origin of the Semitic Alphabet,' in *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, III, 1917(1916). To it Dr. A. E. Cowley, librarian of the Bodleian at Oxford, added another article with the title, 'The Origin of the Semitic Alphabet,' in which he identified more letters and deciphered several words.

The results of Cowley and Gardiner were immediately taken up by Professor Sethe who made progress in identifying the letters in a series of articles. Popular interest, however, was aroused by the ambitious decipherment proposed by Professor H. Grimme¹ of Münster, who claimed to find in the texts references to Moses! (22). A lively controversy was carried on between Sethe and Grimme.

In 1927 Professors Lake and Blake, of Harvard, visited the site, photographed the inscriptions, and found three

1. H. Grimme: *Althebräische Inschriften vom Sinai*.

new ones(356-358). With the help of the fresh light thus obtained,Professor Butin¹ wrote an excellent account of the whole problem up to date,summarizing the results of previous scholars,giving references to their publications and stating his own conclusions. (See *Harvard Theological Review*,XXI,1928.)

At the Congress of Orientalists held in Oxford in 1928,Gardiner returned to the subject and read a paper which has since been published in the *P.E.F. Quarterly Statement*,Jan.1929,48ff. He also exhibited some greatly enlarged photographs and careful copies. In November of the same year,namely,1929,Dr.A.E.Cowley gave a readable account of the subject in *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*,Nov.1929,200ff.,though his discussions are often carried too far by dint of his *a priori* notions.

The most important points in this topic are as follows: first,the date of the inscriptions; second, the identification of each letter with its counterpart in the Semitic alphabet. The second point presupposes

1. R.F.Butin,of the Catholic University of America, Washington,D.C.,was,when Lake and Blake visited Jerusalem in 1927,the director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem.

the decipherment; if the decipherment gives a probable and intelligible sense, it deserves consideration. These points will be discussed in the following pages.

2. Date of the Inscriptions

N.B. To prevent confusion with the 'Sinaitic inscriptions' of the Nabataean the term 'Sinai inscriptions' will be used hereafter.

There are three dynasties, evidentially known in Egypt, under which the mines in the peninsula of Sinai were worked:

1. Ist dynasty
2. XIIth dynasty
3. XVIIIth dynasty

To begin with, at sometime during the first dynasty (B.C. 3400—) the Egyptians began to work the turquoise mines in the Wady Magharah in the peninsula of Sinai. It is quite obvious that the Sinai script does not belong to this period, for there are so few monuments in the temple before the XIIth dynasty.¹ Second, during the XIIth dynasty (2000-1788 B.C.) the mines of Sinai were worked, and one of the kings, Amenemhat III, built a large temple at Serâbât el-

1. Petrie: Reseatches in Sinai, p. 154.

Khadim where our inscriptions were found.¹ Third, under the XVIIIth dynasty (1580-1360 B.C.) the mines were worked for the third time.² It follows, then, that the date for the Sinai inscriptions is to be sought in either the XIIth or the XVIIIth dynasty. The periods of the last two dynasties will be dwelt upon more fully in the following:

Flinders Petrie, in his 'Researches in Sinai,' p.61, offers some evidence as to the date of the inscriptions, ascribing it to the XVIIIth dynasty. The only solid evidence, however, is just a bit of buff pottery with the red and black stripe, which is characteristic of the period of Thothmes III (1501-1447 B.C.), and may be perhaps earlier, but not later.³ On the strength of this ceramic evidence Petrie offers several other relatively important reasons. To enumerate them briefly, no. 346 was found at the door of the shrine of Sopdu, which, according to Petrie, was built by

1. Egypt was, in this period, so prosperous that the era was often regarded in after days as a "golden age"; trade with Punt was resumed, Nubia was conquered to the Second Cataract, which made the southern frontier of the realm; trade, also, with Palestine and Syria flourished.

2. Under this dynasty trade with Punt was resumed, and the "empire period" was inaugurated.

3. Petrie: Researches in Sinai, p. 129-131.

Queen Hatshepsut near the Temple of Hathor, and the sphinx no. 345, is of red sandstone, which was used by Thothmes but not at other times. Also this small sphinx had apparently the Horus-name of Snefru inscribed between the paws, and he is called "the beloved of Hathor, Lady of Turquoise." The veneration of Snefru was strong under Thothmes III, and particularly by Queen Hatshepsut, and the date is inferred to be the period of the famous queen. All these reasons put together form a cumulative argument which induces Petrie to assign the inscriptions to the reign of Hatshepsut¹ and Thothmes III¹, or roughly speaking, to 1500 B.C. Over against the opinion of Petrie, Gardiner² and Sethe³ as well as Butin,⁴ are inclined to assign an earlier date to those inscriptions. The objections are as follows: Queen Hatshepsut did not build the shrine of Sopdu but rather restored and embellished it;

1. Grimme absurdly deciphered 𓏏𓏏𓏏𓏏 'Thothmes' in no. 351, and 𓏏𓏏𓏏𓏏𓏏 'Hatshepsut' in no. 345. (Hjatšepšu und die Sinaischrift-denkmälern: ZDMG 80 (=N.F. 5), 1926, 151ff.)

2. Gardiner: p. 13.

3. Sethe: Neuentdeckte Sinai Schrift, pp. 465ff.; Wissenschaftliche Bedeutung, p. 40.

4. Butin: Serabit Inscriptions, HTR Jan. 1928, p. 20-25.

it was erected during the XIIIth dynasty.¹ According to Butin, the fact that the red sandstone was used for the sphinx is not conclusive in dating it in the reign of Thothmes III, for it does not seem to be a purely Egyptian monument. He also calls attention to the following facts: all the inscriptions, including the statuette, no. 346, are of the same material, the most common at Serâbît; Queen Hatshepsut was undoubtedly a great devotee of Snefru, but the veneration of this Pharaoh did not begin then; in fact it was ~~worshipped~~ during the XIIIth dynasty that he was deified and worshipped as the founder of the mines of Serâbît. As to the ceramic evidence, one can say nothing against it. But, Butin argues, against that evidence, that pottery of a later date could easily be placed in an older mine; for it is far from certain that Mine L, near which most of the inscriptions were found, was worked exclusively by Thothmes III. When it is remembered that Mine L and M were the first met on the way up to the temple

1. Sethe: *Neuentdeckte Sinai Schrift*, p. 465.

2. ~~Petrie, p. 62; Gardiner and Peet, *Inscr. of Sinai*, Plate LXXXIV.~~

of Serâbit¹, the arguments offered by Butin and others deserve some weight.

The weakness of the conclusion of Flinders Petrie is that he stands on a bit of pottery for the only evidence, and the shrine of Sopdu which he says Queen Hatshepsut built was merely restored and embellished from what had originally been built during the XIIth dynasty. The conclusion of Flinders Petrie that the inscriptions should be assigned to about 1500 B.C., while possible in itself, is not supported by any conclusive argument.

On the other hand, there are stronger reasons for assigning them to an earlier date. 1. The vertical slant of some letters: Sethe² has called attention to the vertical direction given in the inscriptions to some letters which normally should be horizontal; this practice was a peculiarity of the Middle Kingdom (dynasties XI-XIV), and does not exist during the New Kingdom, to which period Petrie would assign our inscriptions. 2. The treatment of Ptah: Gardiner, and

1. Petrie, p. 62; Gardiner and Peet, *Inscr. of Sinai*, Plate, LXXXIV.

2. Neuentdeckte Sinai-Schrift, S. 466.

after him Sethe, also refers to the treatment of Ptah in Inscription 351. It is the treatment common during the XIIth dynasty, but is not to be found after that period. From the foregoing evidences and inferences, we are led to assign our inscriptions roughly to 2000-1600 B.C.

For bringing up the inscriptions more specifically to a higher date, the following considerations can be proposed: 1. Analogy of Retenu and 'A'amu:- it is remarked by Butin¹ that on the Egyptian monuments we find an organized band of Semites only under the XIIth dynasty, and more particularly in the reign of Amenemhat III who built a large temple at Serabit el-Khadim. They are the Retenu and 'A'amu.² These Semites were not Bedouins living on Sinai, but as is almost universally admitted, Phoenicians from Syria and Palestine. This will account for the fact that the inscriptions can be fairly well deciphered with ~~XX~~ mere Hebrew knowledge, the earliest traces of which are to be found both in the inscriptions of Ras Shamra and in the Tell el-Amarna glosses (c. 1400 B.C.). It is evident from our inscriptions that at the time when

1. Butin: Serabit Inscriptions, p. 23-24:- It is almost certain that Semitic workers were at Sinai before Amenemhat III, although not organized as we find them under his reign; beginning with the middle of the twelfth dynasty Semitic migration into the Nile valley grew ever stronger.

2. To the bottom of the next page, *.

the inscriptions were written the Semites were a well organized body of workers under various officials. The names of some of them are mentioned in the inscriptions, particularly a certain Ms(𐤌𐤎),¹ and, according to Butin's decipherment, a Rm(𐤓𐤌).² The former is recognized also by A.E. Cowley, in spite of his supporting different decipherments from those of Butin. That the Retenu and 'A'amu are never mentioned after the reign of Amenemhat III tempts us with a good reason to infer that they were not there any more at least as an organized group. The kings of the XIIIth and XIVth dynasties are little more than names to us; the powerful rebellions broke up in the kingdom, and petty kinglets ruled in many parts of the land; and the confusion and obscurity of the time were increased by the sudden invasion of Egypt from the east by the "Hyksos." It can be inferred that in such periods

*(From the last page) The word A'amu is commonly argued to have been derived from the Semitic 𐤀𐤎. But W. Max Müller, in his *Asien und Europa nach altägyptischen Denkmälern*, pp. 121ff., maintains a genuine Egyptian word 𐤀𐤎 'boomerang.' In Coptic, 'ame', plur. 'amiou' means 'herdsman.'

1. Cf. 𐤌𐤎.

2. Cf. 𐤓𐤌 Butin, p. 40, etc.; Rm(𐤓𐤌), Ruth, IV 19.

the mines were not worked intensively. Sethe tried to connect the inscriptions with the Hyksos period, but there is no record of the work during that period and probably there was none. 2. Ahiiram inscription:

The alphabet of the Ahiiram inscription shows a decided advance over that of our Sinai inscriptions; the pictorial character has given place to greatly conventionalized letters. When the Sinaitic origin is assumed, we may well ask whether two or three hundred years are sufficient to account for the development of the script. The difference between the two series is certainly much greater than that existing between the Ahiiram inscription and that of Siloam, although the interval between these is more than 500 years. The three inscriptions, Ahiiram, Siloam, and Mesha, as they appear in comparison, are shown in the following:

gth cent.

Siloam

(2)

Fig. 23. The Ahiram, Mesha, and Siloam inscriptions.

3. The Alphabet of Ras Shamra: It has been pointed out that the well developed form of the Ahiramic alphabet compels us to assume the earlier existence of the prototype of that alphabet, and, in the second place, it has been further stated that if the alphabet of Ras Shamra (14th cent. B.C.) were a mere local branch of the main current of the Phoenician alphabet, then, the early existence of the Phoenician alphabet, perhaps 1500-1400 B.C., can be assumed. It must be remembered, in this aspect of the case, that Phoenicia hardly came into history proper before c. 1600 B.C.¹

All these reasons put together form a cumulative argument which induces us to assume that the Sinaitic alphabet was promulgated under the XVIIIth dynasty, in which Thothmes III (1501-1447) reigned. The foreign conquests in this period brought many immigrants to Egypt and also many Egyptians for longer or shorter periods to foreign lands. Egyptian customs, in dresses, as well as the Egyptian language, changed rapidly during this period. The Asiatic conquests of

1. *Supra*, p. 83.

Thothmes III brought Egypt into relations with Asiatic kings. May we not allot the beginning of the Phoenician alphabet to this period? For, Phoenicia appears on the stage of history about this time! If the Sinaitic derivation of the Phoenician alphabet is proved by more decisive evidence, we can date the Sinaitic inscriptions between 2000 and 1800 B.C., to which period the XIIth dynasty belongs. The only evidence against this conclusion is the fragment of pottery found by Petrie, in due regard to which our inscriptions are tentatively assigned to the period between 2000 and 1600 B.C. To Petrie's date, set as not later nor earlier than c. 1500 B.C., I cannot agree.

3. The Origin of the Sinaitic Alphabet

As already mentioned, Serâbît was industriously exploited by Amenemhat III (XIIth dynasty) and Queen Hatshepsut (XVIIIth dynasty). The peninsula was the meeting-place of diverse influences. None the less, the peninsula was Semitic rather than Egyptian, and was occupied by tribes with South Palestinian con-

nections. Biblical tradition groups all these under Hagar, and Ishmael, Esau, Edom, Mt. Seir and the Horites, and Abraham's concubine Keturah. Moreover, the Horite name Lotan (Gen. xxxvi 20, 22), with which Lot, the ancestor of Ammon and Moab (Gen. xix 30-38; cf. Ps. lxxxiii 8), may no doubt be connected, seems to be an echo of Retenu, an Egyptian name for Palestine; and whether this be so or not, the fact that men of Retenu are explicitly mentioned in Egyptian inscriptions of the XIIth dynasty at Serâbît, unites the peninsula naturally with the Semites of Palestine. Such having been the political conditions, the Egyptian government, in exploiting the mines of Serâbît, had not need of bringing the Semitic laborers from Egypt; they may naturally be supposed to have been secured from South Palestine or Edom, etc. A. E. Cowley¹ connects this with the word [𓂏𓂏𓂏] in nos. 346, 348, 349, 351, 356, which probably means the people of southern Palestine.

1. The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, Nov. 1929, p. 202-203.

Cowley proposes many cases in which the word נִבְנָה can be found in the inscriptions as the appellation of the people of Negeb. The old explanation was from a root נִב meaning to be dry. But there is no evidence for such a root in Biblical Hebrew. It is found only in New Hebrew and late Aramaic. In Arabic on whose boundary the language of Edom trenched geographically, the root نَج has a quite different meaning, and derivatives from نَجِي and نَجِي mean noble, free-man. This is, he suggests, the meaning of נִבְנָה in the inscriptions, for it would very likely be the kind of name which an independent race in a mountaneous country would apply to themselves. This is connected by him with חֲתָרִי assumed to be the Hebrew translation of it, which he contends to mean not troglodytes but pit-men (miners and inhabitants of the mining districts.). חֲתָרִי in Edom (Is. xxxiv. 12) is referred to by him as a probable reminiscence of this.

The word נִבְנָה which Cowley proposes as denoting the people of South Palestine is deciphered by Butin as a totally different word נִבְנָה meaning 'to set up.'

As the originals are inaccessible, I can say nothing conclusive as to the decipherment. Be that as it may, it is generally acknowledged that at the time when the inscriptions were written and for a long time before, the Semites of Phoenicia and of South Palestine, as well as of Sinai, had been in constant communication with Egypt. It is generally believed that the Retenu and the 'A'amu had come from Syria and Phoenicia to take part in the mining expeditions. Under the XIIth dynasty, they had before their eyes numerous Egyptian monuments, possibly worked under Egyptian officials, saw the Lady of Turquoise, and worshipped with a Semitic ritual, perhaps with the occasional participation of the Egyptians.¹

In such an oscillating circle are the Sinaitic inscriptions found. In view of the facts we may proceed to draw the following inferences regarding the origin of the Sinaitic alphabet.

(1) Priority of the Egyptian alphabet:

Of all the

1. Flinders Petrie: *Researches*, chap. xiii.

nations with which the early Semites came into contact the Egyptians are the only ones who have an alphabet in the strict sense, though the syllabic and ideographic signs are used side by side. Attention is called to the fact that the common element in both the Egyptian and the Semitic alphabets is the principle of acrophony, that is to say, the phonetic value of the letter is taken from the initial sound of the name of the object represented by the letter. This was long ago advocated by Charles Lenormant ¹ and has been accepted by many since his day. There are twenty four (later 26) letters² in the Egyptian alphabet and, after they evolved out of the original ideographs, were all-sufficient for representing their language. It is not proved that the early Egyptians elaborated their alphabet consciously in accordance with the principle of acrophony; most probably they did not do so. They seem to have used words with only full fundamental consonant in the same way that they used the biliteral phonograms without any thought of their acrophonic value.³ Apparently

1. See Francois Lenormant: *Sur la Propagation de l'Alphabet Phenicien*, I. p. 87.

2. A few differences are found among scholars as to the number of the letters and phonetic values of some of the letters.

3. Sethe: *Ursprung des Alphabets*, pp. 118ff., 151ff.

they became conscious of the principle during the Middle Empire under the influence of the so-called enigmatic abbreviated writing. At the time of the discovery of the Semitic alphabet the acrophonic value of some of the letters, at least, were well known. Hence there was a method that could be copied, extended, and adapted to the needs of the Semitic language. It must not be taken that the Semites made a servile borrowing of the Egyptian alphabet, but they made rather an imitation or adaptation; as Sethe says, "Vorbild" not "Urbild." For instance, the Egyptian eagle, used for aleph, could not represent that letter in Semitic because the Semitic *nesher* or *'azniah* would not give the desired letter, and on the other hand, both *nun* and *'ayin* were provided for, the one by the serpent and the other by the eye. In making his selection the Semitic genius who elaborated the alphabet seems to have made a conscious discrimination between several possible objects. This free, and not blind, imitation may not be so hard when the principle of acrophony is obtained. In this point, the Sinaitic hypothesis should be preferred to the Cretan hypothesis

which is based simply upon the outward resemblances of form.

(2) Formal resemblance between the two scripts:

Now that the intrinsic relationship between the Egyptian and the Sinaitic alphabets is observed, the outward resemblance of the two scripts will mean something in constructing the theory. It is true that the Sinaitic inscriptions in the Semitic alphabet are written in cruder forms than those of the hieroglyphs of Sinai, and the same can be said of the latter in comparison with the printed hieroglyphs. Acknowledging lack of skill on the part of the engraver, it is also apparent that the Sinaitic script already shows a trace of simplification and loosely conventionalized line. It is suggested by Butin¹ that the present Sinai script, though it is found earliest Semitic alphabet, does not give the original Semitic alphabet, and that there must have been an older stage in which the pictorial character was still clearer and stronger. This is clearly seen by comparing our alphabet with the hieroglyphs of Sinai. In spite of all these facts, mentioned above, the characteristics common to

1. Butin: Serabit Inscriptions HTR. Jan. 1928, p. 31.

the two scripts are too close and striking to be disposed of as incidental. Ullman¹ has found almost all the signs in one Egyptian inscription, no. 53 of the publication of Gaddiner and Peet. There is hardly a sign in the inscriptions that is not found in the surrounding Egyptian monuments; when the form of the Sinai hieroglyphs differs in detail from the pure Egyptian, it is invariably the Sinai form that is reproduced in the inscriptions. One could suppose, also, that after originating elsewhere the signs of our script have been modified so as to make them harmonize better with the Egyptian monuments of Sinai. But such a presumption can hardly be allowed so far as the present materials are concerned.

(3) The Egyptian method of writing:

The Sinai inscrip-

2

tions are written in vertical column arranged from right to left, an ancient Egyptian practice; one (349) runs horizontally from right to left, as became customary in Egypt toward 1900 B.C.; when necessity arises, some words run from left to right as it is also found in

¹ B. L. Ullman: *American Journal of Archaeology*, No. 34, 1927, p. 314.

² Opposed by Bruston.

the Egyptian.¹ These facts indicate that the Egyptian influence on the Sinai inscriptions must be acknowledged.

All these reasons put together form a cumulative argument which moves us to think that probably some of the Semitic leaders who wished to help their illiterate people devised the alphabet. It may possibly have been suggested to them by some of the Egyptian officials with whom the Semites came into contact and under whom they worked. Some may find a serious difficulty in ascribing such an epoch-making innovation to an illiterate people in a sun-bitten and poverty stricken region. Such doubts may be admitted; yet the opposite is likely to be nearer the truth. The learned, familiar with the more complex methods of writing already current, would not have felt the need of a new method, the more so, when it was simpler. The Egyptians, Babylonians, and Chinese, all are nations which could not give up their elaborate scripts, even when they had every means at hand for the simplification of their systems. Complexity was always the sign of intellectual attainment among the learned, and it still is among some of us. On such grounds we should think that it was

1. See the bottom of P120.

devised in order to be useful to inferior class who could not assimilate anything higher.

Summing up all of the foregoing discussions, I am inclined to think that the Egypto-Sinaitic hypothesis is the most satisfactory theory by which we can account for the origin of the Semitic alphabets.

4. The Diffusion of the Proto-Semitic Alphabet

As the Cretan hypothesis has been left evidentially unproved, there is no script to be found, except that of Sinai, to which the origin of the Semitic alphabets can be ascribed, were it not for the cuneiform. If we assume the Sinaitic alphabet as the proto-Semitic alphabet, we are obliged to account for the process by which it was diffused to the north and south Semitic regions. This is followed by the question whether the Phoenician alphabet was directly taken over from the parent-alphabet, separatedly from the south Semitic scripts, or by way of the south Semitic regions.

*(From the bottom of the last page) Sethe: *Neuentdeckte Sinai-Schrift*, pp. 461ff. This practice has survived in many of the subsequent Semitic inscriptions, both in the South and North; see Jaussen and Savignac: *Mission Archéologie en Arabie*, vols. I and II, passim; Grimme: *Die Lösung des Sinaischriftproblems*, pp. 33ff.; Lidzbarski: *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, p. 125, etc.

Though the discussion of such a problem deserves to be treated in a whole section by itself, it seems ~~it~~ rather pertinent for discussion here for the sake of making the necessary connection with the Sinaitic alphabet. In PART I of this treatise, the matter will be dealt with chiefly from the angle of historical and archaeological considerations, and, in PART II, it will be treated from the palaeographical point of view.

The dates The dates of the north and
of inscriptions south Semitic inscriptions will be considered first. We have already seen that the Ahiiram inscription, dating from the 13th century B.C., is the earliest inscription ever found written in the Phoenician alphabet. Moreover, we have argued that the introduction of the alphabet to Phoenicia can be assigned to ~~about~~ the 15th century B.C. on the basis of the well developed form of the Ahhiramic alphabet as well as of the alphabet of Ras Shamra dating from the 14th century B.C., which is to be regarded as a local practice devised from the genuine Phoenician alphabet to meet a certain need.

Along with this argument shall be considered the antiquity of the use of papyrus. Tablets found at Tell el-Amarna, Egypt, show that the Egyptian envoy

Papyrus in Wenamon gave 500 rolls of papyrus

12th cent. B.C. to Zakar-Baal of Byblos in part payment for a shipment of cedar wood. This was at the end of the 12th century B.C. Breasted has shown that the use of pen, ink and papyrus came into Asia from Egypt, and after the 14th century began to supplant the Babylonian clay and stylus. To quote his words, "it is highly unlikely that we can entirely dissociate the physical process and material equipment contributed by Egypt to Asia at this time from the alphabet which Asia likewise gained at the same time."¹ In respect to this the Ahiram inscription should be considered, though it gives no direct attestation to the inference made by Breasted. As late as the 9th century B.C. we have the cursive inscriptions found in the palace of Ahab at Samaria, of which the finders say:² "Written in the ordinary carbon ink used in a similar way in

1. Breasted: Amer. Journ. of Sem. Lang., XXXII, 1916, pp. 230ff.

2. Reisner, Fisher, Lyon: Harvard Excavations at Samaria, 1908, 1910, 1924, I, p. 227.

ancient Egypt." Breasted has observed that the usual date assigned to the introduction of papyrus into Europe is much too late, because the Greek word βύβλος for that article must have been derived from the name of the city when it was still a leading port of Phoenicia. If the papyrus rolls brought by Wenamon to Byblos in the 12th century were used in part at least for export, the alphabet must already have been in use in Greece. According to Eratosthenes, the alphabet was introduced to Greece by Kadmos in 1313 B.C. The shapes of the Greek letters, the Greek name for papyrus, and other reasons form an argument that the ancient tradition as to the time of the introduction of the alphabet into Greece cannot be far from the truth.¹

<u>The presumption of</u>	The Ahiram inscription,
<u>the priority of the</u>	the alphabet of RAS Shamra,
<u>Northern group</u>	the early trace of the use

of papyrus in Phoenicia, especially Byblos, and lastly the appearance of Phoenicia on the stage of history

1. vide Issac Taylor: History of the Alphabet, vol. II. P. 27 - He postulated two separate borrowings of the alphabet by Greeks, the earlier being the Chalcidic alphabet borrowed from the Aramaic peoples, and the second having been borrowed by the Ionians directly from the Phoenician traders.

proper — all these reasons put together will safely form the cumulative argument that the alphabet was introduced into Phoenicia about 1500 B.C. If such be the case, and if the Phoenician alphabet, on its way of diffusion to Phoenicia, had passed the regions of the south Semites, we should have some trace of the use of the proto-Phoenician alphabet. If no light comes from the South-Semitic regions as to the early use of it, we have to meet a difficulty in making the historical connection between the North and South Semitic groups. The decided palaeographical difference can by no means be denied between the two, although most of the letters can be connected in some way or other. In the earliest inscriptions written in the Sabaean alphabet, dating from about 800 B.C.¹ or earlier, the South-Semitic script² is already found in a fully developed form with architectural symmetry and stability so as to be fit for

1. A queen of Saba (the "Queen of Sheba") is said (I.K.X) to have visited Solomon about 950 B.C. There is, however, no mention of such a queen in the inscriptions.

2. Grimme has called particular attention to what he calls Old Thamudean. It is questionable, however, whether any of the Thamudean inscriptions are really ancient. P. Jaussen and Savignac are of opinion that the Thamudean inscriptions are later than the Mineo-Sabaean or than the Libyanitic. It is very questionable whether there is any justification for distinguishing in the Thamudean script
(to the bottom of n. page)

ornamental purposes. As the date of the earliest S. Semitic inscriptions is too late to be compared with the Ahiram inscription, we may presume that the similarity arose through separate borrowings of the two groups from the same source. The N. Semitic origin of the S. Semitic alphabet can also be asserted with sufficiently strong reasons. Lidzbarski has tried to show that the S. Semitic group has been derived from the N. Semitic alphabet;¹ he accounted, above all, for the typological variance as showing the tendency to obtain stability and symmetry of the letters. In this respect the Arabic designation of this architectural alphabet as *musnad* should be remembered. For all this, the greatness of the variance between the N. and S. Semitic alphabets is something to be wondered at; the early Greek alphabet shows greater similarity of form to the Phoenician alphabet. Dussaud found the missing link between the N. and S. Semitic alphabets in the archaic Greek letters,² but this merely satisfies our palaeo-

1. Lidzbarski: *Ephemeris* I, 109-136.

2. Dussaud: *Les Arabes en Syrie*, 76ff.

(from the last page) two successive stages, one ancient and the other recent. As Savignac points out (*Revue Biblique*, 1927, p. 275ff.), there is not a single inscription written in its entirety in the so-called Old Thamudean. The Old Thamudean alphabet has been elaborated by selecting signs from a number of inscriptions in which they occur along with other signs classified as New Thamudean. We may get some light when the Midianite inscriptions on the eastern shore of the Gulf of Aqabah shall some day be collected. We can imagine that the Semites of the Serabit inscriptions came in contact with the Midianites, as we read at a later date in the history of Moses.

graphical curiosity. It would be more systematic to presume a proto-Phoenician alphabet. Here the Sinaitic alphabet comes into consideration again. If we assume that the Northern and Southern groups were borrowed and developed separately from the parent script, we can well account for the variance between the two; but were we to presume the priority of the Northern group, we would have to meet these long-discussed difficulties:

The difficulties (1) The unequal number of
in the search letters in the two groups of
 alphabet, (2) The decided variance of the physiognomy
 of the S.Semitic alphabet, (3) The lack of the early
 S.Semitic inscriptions as compared with earlier Phoe-
 nician inscriptions. Nothing can be done in regard
 to the last one, but to wait for further excavation;
 the second problem is to be discussed in PART II; so
 that the first question remains to be dealt with here.

There are 22 letters in the N.Semitic alphabet, while the S.Semitic has 6 more. It is most probable that many of the letter found in the Southern group and lacking in the Northern group are mere modifications of other signs and not independent creations.¹ It is deserving

1. F. Hommel: *Südarabische Chrestomathie*, 1893; Sethe: *Neuentdeckte Sinai-Schrift*, pp. 459ff.

of notice that in almost all cases, the signs of the Sinaitic alphabet are reducible to those of the Phoenician group. On the other hand, the names of the Arabic or Ethiopic letters not found in Hebrew are evidently mere suggestions of the sound and have special meaning; as it has already been pointed out, not only the sign but also the name seems to be of more recent origin, at a time when a desire was felt for differentiation in script as well as in pronunciation. In view of these considerations, it seems far more probable that the North Semitic alphabet was the more primitive. What causes difficulty in this presumption is that the outward connection between the Sinai script and the earliest Phoenician alphabet is not very close. But, from another point of view, this will account for the lapse of several hundred years between the two scripts.

5. Identification of the Signs on the Basis of Canaanitic nouns

1. *Aleph*. *Aleph* means ox; therefore, the figure  is identified with this letter by unanimous agreement of scholars; the ox-head is not yet conventionalized but is clear in all the forms.

2. *Beth*. *Beth* means house; the square sign $\square, \blacksquare$ is, therefore, identified with this letter. Ullman includes under *beth* the sign $\mathcal{C}$ on the strength of the subsequent Phoenician form of that letter, i.e., $\mathcal{S}$; ¹ but Butin deems it a *resh* (human head) badly formed. ² He adds that it is not likely that the engraver would have given such a different form in the same inscription. If the doubtful one in no. 252 is deciphered a *resh*, the word is read רר , probably a proper name. Cowley gives, in comparison, רר in Gen. xxxvi. 26, one of the "sons" of Seir in the land of Edom. Moreover, he remarks that the large number of names in that genealogy ending in ר suggests that the termination is merely formative and could be omitted. (cf. רר with רר and רר ; רר with רר . This is a remark apposite to the case. The way in which Ullman connects it with the Phoenician 'beth' is too abrupt, and can hardly be accepted so far as our material is concerned.

3. *Gimel*. Butin observes that there is agreement among scholars about this letter, ³ and adds that in

1. Ullman: *Amer. Jour. of Arch.*, July-Sept., 1927, p. 314.

2. Butin: *Harv. Theo. Rev.*, Jan. 1928, p. 14.

3. *ibid.* *ibid.*

	Sinai (Butin)	Ahiram (Dussaud)	Mesha	Thamu- dean (Grimme)	Min.- Sabaeen (Guidi)	Early Greek	Hebrew		Sinai	
1	8 8 8	K K	4	𐤀 𐤁 𐤂	𐤃	Δ A	א	23	𐤃	(352) Very probably a variation of <u>resh</u>
2	□ □ □ □	9 9	9	𐤄 𐤅 𐤆 𐤇	𐤈 (A)	2 8 9	ב	24	𐤄	(352, 356) Probably a variation of <u>taw</u>
3	⋈ ⋈ ⋈)	1	1	𐤉 𐤊	7	7 >	ג	25	𐤉	(350, 352) Probably a variation of <u>kaph</u>
4	⋈	△	△	𐤋 𐤌	𐤍 (H)	△ D	ד			(357)? <u>Yodh</u> or <u>Aleph</u> & <u>He</u>
5	⋈ ⋈ ⋈	3 3	3	𐤎 𐤏 𐤐	𐤑 𐤒	3 7	ה	26	𐤑	
6	𐤓 𐤔 𐤕 𐤖	𐤗 𐤘	𐤙	𐤚 (𐤛 𐤜)	𐤝	7 7 𐤞	ו			(357) Probably two letters, <u>kamed</u> and <u>Aleph</u> written closely together.
7	⋈ = =	I	⋈	𐤟 𐤠	8	I	ז	27	𐤟	
8	8 8 also no. 5	𐤡	𐤢	𐤣 𐤤 𐤥	𐤦 𐤧	𐤨 𐤩	ח			
9	⋈ 0 ⋈ 0	⊕	⊗	𐤧 𐤨	𐤩	⊗ ⊕	ט	28	⊗	(357) ?
10	𐤩 (𐤪)	3	7	𐤫 𐤬	9	2 3 /	י	29	𐤩	(357) ? Possibly two signs, the second being <u>Ayin</u>
11	𐤭 (𐤮)	𐤯	𐤰	𐤱 𐤲	𐤳	𐤴	כ	30	𐤱	(358) ?
12	9 9 0 9 9	L	6	𐤴 𐤵	1	1 J	ל			
13	m m	3 3	𐤶	𐤷 𐤸	𐤹 (J)	𐤺	מ	31	𐤹	(358)? <u>Dalet</u> ?
14	𐤻 𐤼 𐤽	𐤾	𐤿	𐥀 𐥁 /	𐥂	𐥃	נ			
15	𐥄 𐥅 𐥆	𐥇	𐥈	𐥉	𐥊 (H)	𐥋 𐥌	ו			
16	𐥍 𐥎 𐥏 𐥐	𐥑	𐥒	𐥓 𐥔	𐥕 (H)	𐥖 𐥗	ז	32	𐥕	(358) Probably a variation of <u>Ayin</u> ; eye with the eyelids.
17	□	))	𐥖	𐥗 𐥘	𐥙	𐥚	ח			
18	𐥛 𐥜 𐥝	(H)	𐥞	𐥟 𐥠	𐥡	𐥢 𐥣	ט			Seth's signs nos. 18(a)
19	— 0		𐥣	𐥤 𐥥	𐥦	𐥧 𐥨	פ			20(𐥩); 28(𐥪) and 30(𐥫) have been omitted in the above table.
20	𐥩 𐥪 𐥫	𐥬	𐥭	𐥮 𐥯	𐥰	𐥱	ק			
21	𐥲 𐥳	𐥴	𐥵	𐥶 𐥷 𐥸	𐥹 𐥺		ש			
22	⋈ ⋈	⋈	X	⋈	X (𐥻)	⋈	ת			

Fig. 24. Sinaitic Alphabet.

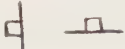
the inscriptions which were known before the expedition of Lake and Blake(nos.345-355),the curved form of the boomerang() had not been found in place of the right angle formed by the two lines($\mathbb{L}$, $\mathbb{L}$, $\mathbb{L}$); Inscriptions 357 and 358 supply the desired form. A.E.Cowley,however,adhering to the $\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}$ -hypothesis,reads $\mathbb{L}$ whenever Butin's $\mathbb{L}(\mathcal{O})$ occurs. He says that in shape it is probably derived from the Egyptian , a bowl with a handle,in Hebrew $\mathbb{L}$ from which the value $\mathbb{L}$ is taken; when at a later stage it had lost its resemblance to a bowl,it received another name($\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}$) from a fancied likeness to the head,and neck of a camel. What Cowley proposes is all very plausible at first sight,except that he leaves the sign of the right angle undeciphered. Here it must be added that the copies of the Inscriptions used by Cowley are not of first-hand sources. Butin is at an advantage in this respect for he visited Cairo. Considering the fact that the word $\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}$ (Butin) or $\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}$ (Cowley) is preceded or followed in each of several cases by the word $\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}$ (chief) or $\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}$ ($\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}$?),it is likely to denote 'people'; if $\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}$,it may read 'setters up'(perhaps of the stone),and if $\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}\mathbb{L}$,it is 'Nagibin' which Cowley suggested. Which,then,of $\mathbb{L}$ ($\mathbb{L}$)and $\mathcal{O}$ is to

be identified with *gimel*? 'Camel' is not found in the hieroglyphs.¹ The meaning 'boomerang' has been explained by comparison with the Assyrian *gamlu*.² This would lead us back to the hieroglyph representing a boomerang:  in printed hieroglyph, and  in Sinai hieroglyph. This form is found, though with slight differences, throughout the South and North Semitic alphabets: S.group - Thamudean  , Sabaeen  , Liḥyanitic  , Safahitic  , oldest Ethiopic  etc.; N.group - Ahiram   , Abiba'al  , Phoenician  , Mesha  , Zenjirli  , Siloam  etc. Cowley's theory remains less plausible so far. Nor is it ap-
posite to presume that those primitive isolated miners, which Cowley would have us observe, were so cogently self-conscious as to call themselves Nagibin on every occasion.

4. *Daleth*. *Daleth* means 'door'. This letter does not seem to occur in any of the inscriptions except in no. 345, i.e.  . But the assumed figure

1. Ullman: Origin and Development of Alphabet, American Journal of Archaeology, vol. xxxi, Num. 3, 1927, p. 315.

2. So Eisler (Journal Asiatic Society, 1928, pp. 35ff.), who even derives the character from cuneiform. But this is improbable.

for this letter does not resemble the triangular *daleth* of the N.group and early Greek; while the South Semitic shows more accuracy in preserving the original shape, i.e., Tham. , Sab. , Lib.  , Saf.   . The Sign for 'door' in the Sinai hieroglyphic is , and in printed hieroglyphic, .

5. *He*. Sethe's conjecture¹ that *he*, 'behold', is based on the Egyptian symbol of a man with uplifted arms, seems conclusive:

Sinai Semitic

" hieroglyphic

One form of *heth* is the same as *he*, and it is always doubtful, except from the context, whether we should read *he* or *heth*. See no. 26 in Butin's list. ().

6. *Waw*. The meaning of the word is 'hook', 'support'. (Cf. Ex. 26:32 etc.). The form given is found four times in the inscriptions,    . Gardiner identified it with the Egyptian ; while Grimme, on the basis of the Southern group, gave a circle or "rosette", as the Sinaitic *waw*. Granting

1. 'Neuentdeckte', p. 444.

that there is the possibility of different pictorial representations for the same object, Butin's identification() can well be supported on the basis of the Phoenician *waw*  . Grimme's *waw* is not likely to be found in our inscriptions.

7. *Zain*. The meaning is not certain. "Weapon", "sickle", "olive", all have been suggested. Cowley makes the following suggestion with some hesitation.¹ There is a late (Talmudic) word  meaning 'twig', 'brushwood'. This looks like a popular reduplication (cf.  'water') of an original  of which the dual would be  'two twigs', eventually reduced to  . In the Northern group *zain* consists of two parallel lines connected,  etc. The Sinaitic *zain* consists of two parallel lines, generally horizontal but once (no. 356) apparently vertical. The lines are not connected, except once and that doubtfully. The Sinai Semitic =  , Ahiram  , Mesha  , and South Semitic   forms are interesting developments of this form. (cf.  = ). The Samaritan form  , striking as it is, is due rather to the cursive tendency to make letters in one stroke

1. Egypt. Jour. of Arch., Nov. 1929, p. 202.

than to a survival of the original shape.

8. *Heth*. This letter may have the same sign as *he* itself. Another sign for *heth* which occurs two or three times is suggested by Butin —  ; it is the sign for one of the *heth* sounds in Egyptian which might have been borrowed directly, both sign and sound, and all the more easily perhaps because in Egyptian it is one of the "cords and plaited-work signs" and 'cord' in Hebrew is חבל, which would give the same sound according to the principle of acrophony.¹ But this is only a supposition.

It is an interesting phenomenon that the Sinaitic *he* sign is used in the South Semitic for *heth*, while, in the North Semitic it has characteristics which have caused it to be connected with the meaning, 'fence', or 'enclosure'. Ullman compares the North Semitic *heth*   with the Egyptian symbol for 'wall'. In this case, the Sinaitic hieroglyphs give good transitional forms —      . It will be interesting if this could be related to ח in Ezek. xiii. 10, where it

1. Butin suggests that this form may lie at the basis of the Phoenician *heth*.

is usually translated 'wall'.

9. *Teth*. The meaning of *teth* is quite uncertain. Sethe¹ claims that *teth* is a modification of *taw* by the addition of a circle — . the name 'teth' has no special meaning according to him. The form that he proposes seems correct, but whether the explanation is right or not, it is probably too early to decide.³

10. *Yod*. Most scholars see the hand as the sign for *yod* ().¹ It occurs in no. 349. A modified form is supposed to occur in no. 345, but with uncertainty. The *scripta plena* is seldom used, if ever, in our inscriptions, and the *matres lectionis* cannot be expected to appear ~~too~~ often. Thus *he*, *waw*, and *yod* are rare.

11. *Kaph*. Opinions do not agree as to the meaning of the word. It has been supposed to mean "palm of the hand", as given in *Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte* and by Ullman. If this were the real meaning, numerous passages in the Old Testament can be connected with it.³ On the other hand, Sethe, Grimme and Butin derive the sign from a plant-sign in the Egyptian. If so, sign 25()

1. Gardiner, Sethe, Butin, Ball in *Reallexikon d. Vorgeschichte*, p. 354.

2. of especially 2K.xi.12, of clapping the hands, and Ex.ix.29, 33, of spreading them out in prayer.

3. vide 2.

would be the older as against the one given under 11 ( ). This, however, remains uncertain. Whatever may have been the meaning attributed to the word, the form of sign 11, judged from the N. Semitic form of *kaph*, clearly seems to represent *kaph*.

12. *Lamed*. *Lamed* is generally said to mean 'ox-goad', the word originally meaning 'to teach'.¹ There is perfect agreement on the value of the sign in our inscriptions, although there is disagreement as to the meaning of the name. The arbitrary direction of the sign points to the fact that it had not yet been conventionalized:

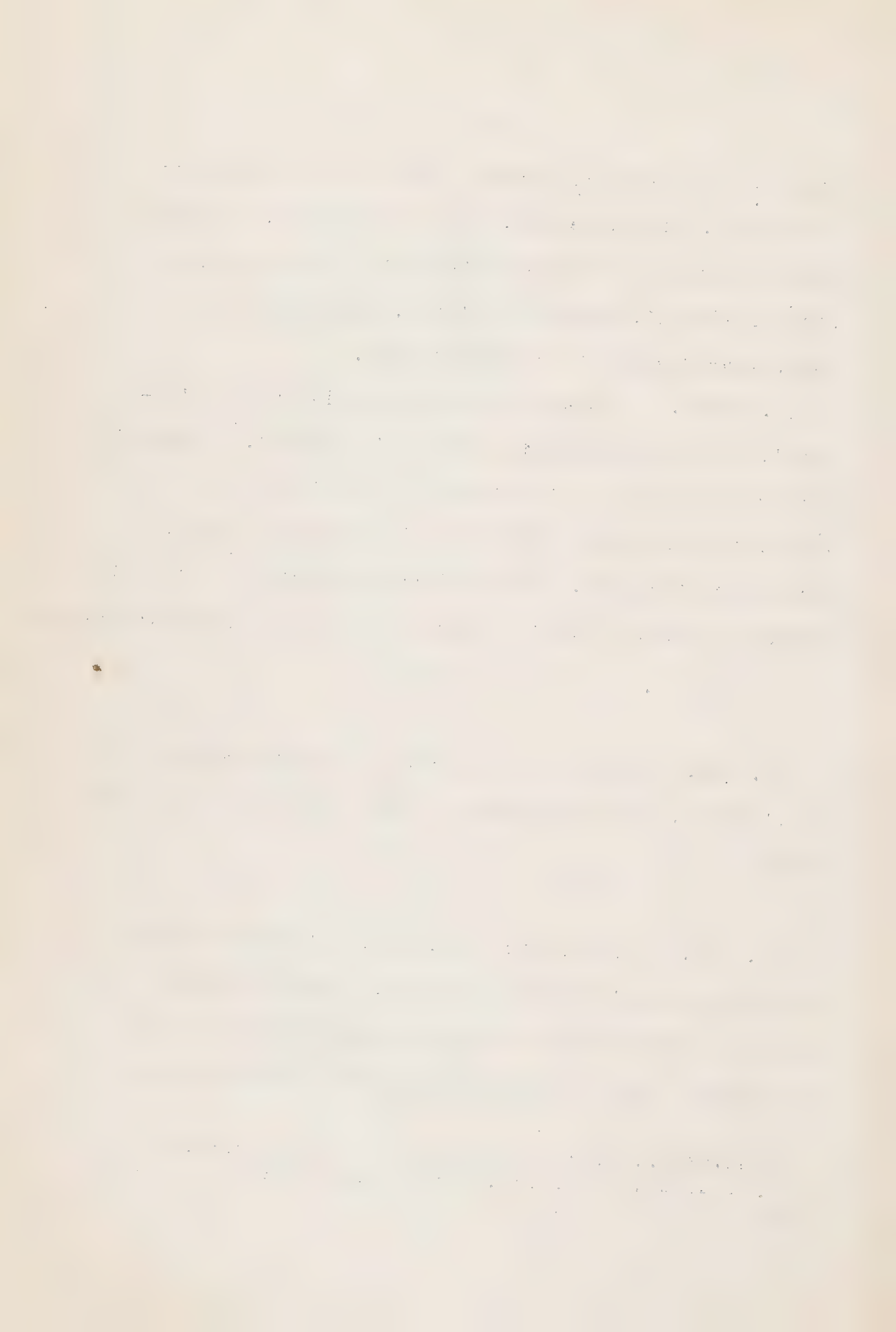
     

13. *Mem*. There are objections to the meaning of *mem*, "water". All are agreed on the sign and its phonetic value:

14. *Nun*. The letter *nun*, meaning 'fish', is called *nahash*, 'serpent', in South Semitic. Cowley claims that  =    became   = fish passing under Aramaic influence. This is not inconceivable, because in fact

1.  (Jd. iii. 31) is translated "ox-goad"; this verb is used in Hos. x. 11, of training a heifer to the yoke.



when the alphabet was established there may have been nothing essential about the names of the several letters. The original name *nahash* is supported by Butin. Be that as it may, the sign 'serpent' occurs so often that no doubt remains as to its value as *nun*.

15. *Samekh*. The sign of 'fish', as in the case of 'serpent', occurs so often that hardly any doubt remains as to its representing the letter *samekh*. In both Thamudean and Sabaeen the sign is  which reminds us of a fish. In early Greek it is represented by   which are to be compared with the Chinese sign for fish 魚.¹ Taking off the head and the fins and the tail, the sign  (or ) represents the body of the fish, which is the same as *samekh* in early Greek; this sign  can be simplified thus ; the nearest form of this is found in the Northern group, e.g., Ahiram , Mesha . Between the picture of real fish in the Sinai inscriptions and the Phoenician sign of *samekh* there must be presumed quite a long evolutionary process which is totally lost. In the Phoenician *samekh* what can be taken as the tail is found in the drooped vertical line, which is, on the

1. The cross in the square designates the scales of the fish.

other hand, cut out in the early Greek. If the Phoenician *samekh* were, as Evans¹ suggests, the sign of a tree, the early Greek *xi*=*samekh*  would make a bad possibility. Should we take *samekh*, as Ullman does, as meaning 'prop' and seek its prototype in the Egyptian and Sinaitic hieroglyphs, as these , we have to meet the difficulty that no such sign is found in the Sinai inscriptions. In all probability the sign of fish is *samekh*, which is supported both by Sethe and Butin, though no decisive conclusion has yet been reached.

16. '*Ayin*. The word means 'eye', and it is under that form that we find it in the inscriptions; sometimes the eye is drawn with the pupil; once it appears with the eyelids. The sign is generally drawn horizontally, but if space or some other reason requires, it is given vertically. On this point also there is agreement.

17. '*Pe*. The word means 'mouth',. Its form is apparently a small square (), smaller than *Beth* and thus distinguished from it. In '*Ahiram*' and '*Mesha*' it is found in more cursive forms , while, in the Southern group it is found in most cases in rhombic shape .

1. *Scripta, Minoa*, p. 87.

18. *Sade*. Neither the meaning of the name nor the identification of the assumed sign is yet clear. Cowley¹ reads *gimel* in the sign given by Eisler and Grimme, which is identified by Butin² as *sade*. Cowley derives the sign  from the Egyptian , a bowl with a handle, in Hebrew  from which the value 3 is taken; and, when at a later stage it had lost its resemblance to a bowl, it received another name () from a fancied likeness to the head and neck of a camel. But, after all, his suggestion remains without evidence.

Lidzbarski, in his *Ephemeris*,³ conjectures that in the inscription of Mesha⁴ the primitive SADE was a step sign () from which he concluded that the primitive appellation must have been derived from *sa'ad* () "to ascend".

Ullman⁵ suggests that the prototype of *sade* might be the Egyptian hieroglyph showing a side view of a man sitting in a chair () and the name is perhaps

1. The Jour. of Egypt. Arch., Nov. 1929, p. 205.
2. Harv. Theol. Rev. Jan. 1928, p. 17 et al.
3. *Ephemeris für sem. epigr.*, II p. 138.
4. *Sade* is also found in the text of Abiba'al, but not in 'Ahiram'.
5. Amer. Jour. of Arch., July+Sept., 1927, l. 314.

related to the word 73 'side'.

In both cases, the discussion is based upon the form of the North Semitic *sade*, with which the Sinai inscriptions have nothing to do. As far as the decipherment is concerned, the Eisler-Grimme-Butin *sade* () consistently yields good sense where it occurs in several cases. Moreover, a closely similar form is found in the Thamudean —  . All said, we have to leave room for doubt regarding this letter in the Sinai inscriptions.

19. *goph*. Whether the word means 'the back of the head', or, as Ullman suggests, 'knot', is uncertain. The Sinaitic sign (—) for this letter was suggested by Sethe,¹ and accepted by Eisler,² Grimme, and Ullman. Though it does not exist in the Ahiiram inscription, early Greek has preserved the sign accurately under these forms    , and the *goph* of the Mesha stone () is very close to it, as is the case also in the Southern Semitic alphabets. In spite of our poor knowledge³

1. Neuentdeckte, p. 448.

2. Weihinschriften, p. 100.

3. Though the *goph* looks like 'knot' in the South Semitic alphabets — Tham.  —, Sabaeen  , Lib.  , Saf.  , yet, there is hardly any such feature observed in the Sinaitic — , Mesha  , and early Greek    . Though it looks more like a knot in Eshmun'azar and New Punic —  , it is not of much consequence in the present connection for its later cursive tendency. Rightly meant, the word *goph* can be connected with the root $\text{ג} \text{ו} \text{פ}$ meaning 'to go round', from which can be derived the following words, i.e., $\text{ג} \text{ו} \text{פ}$ = monkey, $\text{ג} \text{ו} \text{פ}$ = circuit, orbit of the sun, or revolution (of time). What, then, do the Sinaitic, early Greek, and secondly the Mesha *goph* signs mean?

about the meaning of the letter, the sign in our inscriptions can certainly be identified with that letter.

20. *Resh*. There is no disagreement in identifying the sign for the human head with *resh*. In our inscriptions the sign is, unlike other signs, not yet conventionalized.

21. *Shin*. This letter occurs very often in the inscriptions, and there is no doubt about the value of the sign, on which there is complete agreement. The form of the letter () is also very consistent throughout. *Shin* may mean 'tooth'. A plausible prototype is, as suggested by Sethe and Ullman, the Egyptian sign for mountain, i.e.  . Either the inventor of the alphabet mistook this sign for a picture of teeth, or else he used tooth in the figurative sense for mountain. Thus used in the Old Testament (Job xxxix.28; IS.xiv.4,5; also the place named *Shen* in IS.vii.12).

22. *Taw*. The same sign is observed in our inscriptions as in other Semitic alphabets throughout, therefore, there is no doubt about the value of this sign, on which the agreement is complete.

In addition to the above-mentioned twenty-two signs,

Butin, who has done a fine work in summing up the various opinions and in deciphering the inscriptions, gives ten more signs with notes:

1.  (352) Very probably a variation of Resh
2.  (352? 356) Probably a variation of taw
3.  (350, 352) Probably a variation of Kaph.
4.  (357) ?Yodh or Aleph. ??He.
5.  (357) Probably two letters, Lamed and Aleph,

written closely together.

6.  (357) ?

7.  (357) ? Probably two signs, the second being 'Ayin.

8.  (358) ?

9.  (358) ? Daleth?

10.  (358) Probably a variation of 'Ayin; eye with the eyelids.

Whether these signs are to be taken as the variations of some of the 22 letters or as other letters beside normal Northern 22 letters cannot be decided at once.

One is tempted to suppose that the dialect of the Sinai inscriptions may have had special characteristics, e.g., an affinity with Arabic. It would be, therefore, too much

to expect everything to be explained from our knowledge of the Hebrew of a thousand years later. Even in the periods which we know best, there is scarcely an inscription in Hebrew, Phoenician, or Aramaic which does not present its difficulties. Is it not a fact that, even in our Old Testament, the song of Deborah of perhaps the 13th cent. B.C., for example, cannot be perfectly explained from our knowledge of Biblical Hebrew? When more comparative materials are obtained to explain those redundant signs more clearly, we may perhaps be able to tell to which group, the Southern or Northern, the language of the inscriptions belongs; and this will be of momentous consequence in deciding the priority of either the Northern or the Southern group in the assumed diffusion of the Sinaitic alphabet. It is true that the inscriptions can be fairly well deciphered with the knowledge of Hebrew; the language, therefore, may be of Canaanitic lineage.¹

1. cf. Rutin, Harv. Theol. Rev. Jan. 1928, p. 35:

<i>Pronouns.</i>	<i>Personal.</i>	1st pers. ׀, 349(?)
	<i>Suffix.</i>	1st pers., mater lectionis not written, 356, 353.
		2nd pers. fem. ׀, 353.
		3rd pers. sing. masc. ׀, 357(?).

Demonstrative. Masc. sing. 𐤀, 346.

Fem. sing. 𐤁, 351, 352.

Plur. 𐤂, 350.

Relative.

With antecedent, 𐤃, 356, 349(?).

Without antecedent, 𐤄, 352.

Nouns.

Feminine ends in 𐤅.

Masculine plur. 𐤆, 356; 𐤇, passim.

Apparently there is one case where a noun does not take the plural ending after a numeral, 358.

If those extra signs are, as Butin assumes, variations of the normal signs, we can well imagine that more than one sign could have been used for one letter. If no. 9 in the extra signs could be read as 'aleph', what a fit connection it would be with the Ahiramic 'aleph'!

No. 9 𐤀

Ahram 𐤀

But the sign no. 9, read as *aleph*, does not make intelligible sense; hence, it is read by Butin as *daleth*, and by Cowley as *heth*:

No. 358¹

←
𐤁 ↓
𐤂
𐤃
𐤄
𐤅
𐤆
𐤇
𐤈
𐤉

1. This inscription was discovered by the Harvard Mission in Mine M, but its unfavorable position prevented its being photographed and we have only Blake's transcription.

1. The first part of the report

2. The second part of the report

3. The third part of the report

4. The fourth part of the report

5. The fifth part of the report

6. The sixth part of the report

7. The seventh part of the report

8. The eighth part of the report

9. The ninth part of the report

10. The tenth part of the report

11. The eleventh part of the report

12. The twelfth part of the report

13. The thirteenth part of the report

14. The fourteenth part of the report

15. The fifteenth part of the report

16. The sixteenth part of the report

Butin, p. 43.

Cowley, p. 217.

/// ג פסל מנרל

/// אנת לבעלת אמן

Cowley's decipherment is hardly possible; even in Butin's, the letter ג is a mere guess.

All that can be summarized from the foregoing discussion on the Sinai Script is as follows:

1. The language of the Sinai inscriptions is all very plausibly Canaanitic.
2. Each sign in the inscriptions coincides with the North Semitic name of a letter of the alphabet, except the unintelligible ten extra signs which are supposed by Butin to be variations of the normal 22 letter.
3. The Sinai alphabet is based on the acrophonic principle in common with the Semitic alphabet.
4. The direct historical and archaeological connection between the Sinaitic and Phoenician alphabets is lost.

Such being the present state of our research, the prematurity of the Egypto-Sinaitic hypothesis must be acknowledged; at the same time, a promising prospect in this direction is laid open before our searching eyes.

What we can now do following up the historical and archaeological search, is to observe and investigate the North and South Semitic alphabets from the palaeographical point of view, and to trace out the priority of either of the two groups in the historical stage.

PART. II

PALAEOGRAPHICAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE
NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN BRANCHES
OF THE SEMITIC ALPHABET

I. CLASSIFICATION OF THE SEMITIC ALPHABETS

I. NORTH SEMITIC

A. 'Ras Shamra'(Exception) *

B. Phoenician

1. Old Phoenician cf. Zanjirli

2. Middle Phoenician

3. Punic Neo-Punic

C. Aramaic

1. Zanjirli(or Old Aramaic)

2. Palmyrene and Syriac

3. Nabataean Arabic

D. Hebrew

1. Old Hebrew and Samaritan

2. Square Hebrew(or Aramaic-Hebrew) cf. Teima

II. SOUTH SEMITIC

S. Arabic:

A. Sabaean Ethioric

a. Minaean

b. Hadramautic

c. Katabanitic

d. Sabaean

* Supra, p. 70ff.

N. Arabic:

B. Safahitic

C. Thamudean(also called proto-Arabic)

D. Lihyanitic

II. THE QUESTION OF PALAEOGRAPHICAL SENIORITY AS BETWEEN THE N. AND S. BRANCHES

Very early in the evolution of the Semitic alphabet both the North and South Semitic alphabets are supposed to have branched off separately. We have already stated that the North Semitic alphabet, sometimes very properly called the Phoenician, can be traced up to the 13th century B.C. in the Ahiram inscription.¹ On the other hand, the only South Semitic inscriptions ever found are ascribed to much later dates than this. Until 1845 the only script known in South Arabia was the Ethiopic alphabet or *Ge'ez* alphabet. Then the first South Semitic inscriptions were found by Bellsted and Cruttenien; the materials were considerably augmented by Arnaud² and,

1. *Supra*, p. 50ff.

2. *Journal Asiatique*, 4. Série 5 Tome, Paris, 1845: *Relation d'un voyage a Mareb (Saba) dans l'Arabie Méridionale, entrepris en 1848 par M. Arnaud*, p. 211-245, 309-345, 6 Tome, *Inscriptions, Transcription Arabe et Remarques de M. Fresnel*, p. 169-237.

above all, by Halévy, Glaser, Euting, Graf Landberg, and Littmann. In the decipherment and interpretation of the inscriptions the above-mentioned scholars, as well as Fresnel, Osiander, Mordtmann, D.H. Müller and Hommel had a large share. The decipherment, however, is not even to-day satisfactorily achieved. In the recent list the S. Semitic inscriptions, large and small, amount to c. 2000, among which the Sabaean holds the highest date. To the oldest Minaean monument, Glaser, Weber, and Hommel give the date of about 1200 B.C., while Lidzbarski and Evans bring the earliest date for it down to 800 B.C. which, from various considerations, is more probable. Most of the Sabaean inscriptions come down from 5-1 cent. B.C. The north Arabian inscriptions, written in the Safahitic alphabet, can be quite certainly dated in 106 A.D.¹; most probably, however, in about 750 B.C. the Safahitic alphabet had already been an important Kulturfaktor in the inland province of Phoenicia.² The Thamudean script from N.W. Arabia is supposed to come down from a period sometime before the Christian

1. S. Littman, *Zur Entzifferung der Safa-Inschriften*, Leipzig, 1901.

2. Praetorius: *Zur Geschichte des griech. Alphabets im: ZDMG 56, 1902, S. 680.*

era, though Grimme has less correctly called special attention to what he calls Old Thamudean.¹ The Lihyanitic inscriptions belong to 3-4th centuries B.C., while the script stands, in every respect, closer to the south Arabian (Sabaeen). The Ethiopic script which had been developed from the south Arabian comes with its earliest inscription from the 4th century A.D. On the whole, the Sabaeen alphabet belongs to the highest date, namely, 800 B.C.

There are naturally two opposing judgments on the question of seniority or priority as between the N. and S. Arabian groups. Lidzbarski² and Jensen³ hold that all the other S. Semitic alphabets had been derived from the Sabaeen. Over against this view stands the opinion of Praetorius⁴ who assumed that the N. Arabian group — Lihyanitic, Thamudean, Safahitic — occupy a place between the Phoenician and S. Arabian (Sabaeen) groups. D. H. Müller⁵ with the Lihyanitic, and Dussaud-Maccler⁶ with the Safahitic, had already partly expressed Praetorius' opinion.

1. *Supra*, p. 124ff.

2. *Ephemeris* II, S. 366gg.

3. *Geschichte der Schrift*, 1925, S. 135.

4. *Bemerkungen zum südsemitischen Alphabet* in: *ZDMG* 58 (1904), S. 715-726.

5. *Epigraphische Denkmäler aus Arabien*, Wien, 1889.

6. *Voyage archéologique au Sana ... Paris*, 1901.

Phoen.	Sabaean	Old Ethiopic	Ethiopic (Ge'ez)	Liḥyan	Safah.	Tham.		
𐤀	ሀ	ሀ አ	አ	ሀሀሀ	ሀሀሀ	ሀሀሀ	,	
𐤁	በ	በ	በ	በ	ሀሀ	በ	b	
𐤂	ገ	ገ ገ	ገ	ገ	ሀሀ	ገ	g	
𐤃	ደ	ደ ደ	ደ	ደ	ደ ደ	ደ ደ	d	
𐤄	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀሀ	ሀሀ	h	
𐤅	ወ	ወ ወ	ወ	ወ	ወ ወ	ወ ወ	w	
𐤆	ጸ	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ	ገ	ገ ገ	z	
𐤇	ሠ	ሐ	ሐ	ሐ	ሐሐ	ሐሐ	h	
𐤈	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ	ጠ ጠ	ጠ ጠ	t	
𐤉	የ	የ የ	የ	የ	የ	የ	Y	
𐤊	ሐ	ሐ ሐ	ሐ	ሐ	ሐ ሐ	ሐ ሐ	K	
𐤋	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	l	
𐤌	መ	መ	መ	መ	መ መ	መ መ	m	
𐤍	ነ	ነ ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ	ነ ነ	n	
𐤎	ሐ(ጸ)*	ሐ	ሐ	ሐ	ሐ ሐ	ሐ ሐ	s	
𐤏	ዐ	ዐ ዐ	ዐ	ዐ	ዐ ዐ	ዐ ዐ	ʿ	
𐤐	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	P	
𐤑	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ʃ	
𐤒	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	q	
𐤓	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	r	
𐤔	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	s	
𐤕	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	t	
	ዘ			ዘ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	d	
	ሀ ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ	ሀ	h	
	ሀ				ሀ ሀ		z	
	ሀ			ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ሀ ሀ	ʃ	
	ዘ	ዘ	ዘ		ዘ	ዘ ሀ	d (ʃ)	
	ዐ			ዐ	ዐ ሀ	ዐ	i	
		ዐ ሀ	ዐ				f	
			ዐ				p	
			ዐ				p	

Fig. 25. South Semitic Alphabets. (* Given in the lists of Grimme, Guidi, Butin & CIS, but not in that of Jensen).

But chronological difficulty inheres in Praetorius' conclusion, which Lidzbarski did not fail to point out. Littmann¹ especially called attention to the fact that the Thamudean looks somewhat older than the Safahitic. This, however, means only that the forms regarded as older stand nearer to the S. Arabian (Sabaeen).

Inferences from the historical, documentary, as well as palaeographical evidence justify us in thinking that the Sabaeen alphabet is the mother-stem from which the three scripts, Lihyanitic, Thamudean, and Safahitic, branched off. Lidzbarski and Jensen adopt this view.

The relationship between the south and north Semitic alphabets has to be considered in connection with that of the proto-south-Semitic and the proto-Semitic. The matter can be considered in two ways: First, if the south Semitic alphabet was derived from the north Semitic, the process might have been completed before the latter branched out into the three groups, namely, Phoenician, Aramaic, and old-Hebrew (or Canaanitic); second, both the north and south Semitic alphabets branched out almost simultaneously from the assumed proto-Semitic, or rather

1. Entzifferung der Thamudenischen Inschriften (Mitt. d. vorderasiat. Gesellsch. 9, I. S. 1-112, 1904.

proto-Phoenician. The comparatively lower date of the earliest Sabaeen inscription (800 B.C.) is not to be thought in the least as a discouragement for these two presumptions. In view of the beautifully developed form of the Sabaeen alphabet, we can well bring the date for its origination up to 1200-1000 B.C. A much higher date can be claimed for the origination of the Phoenician alphabet.¹ Chronologically, the priority claim of the Phoenician alphabet is, in every respect, more forceful than that of the Sabaeen. The antique aspect of the South Semitic, and the frequent βουστροφηδόν made of writing the south Semitic are remarkable. Lidzbarski explained the former as the result of calligraphic and architectural effort to obtain symmetry. The antique practice of βουστροφηδόν is ascribed by him to the same reason. With the exception of a few cases of Boustrophedon, all the south Semitic inscriptions are written from right to left. Lidzbarski, however, pressed his discussion to the point of proving the direct direction of the south Semitic from the north Semitic; but this is hardly conceivable. Praetorius' opinion that the north south-

1. *Supra*, p. 50 ff.

Semitic should be regarded alphabets as links between the Phoenician and Sabaean alphabets is not convincing in itself on account of the younger dates of those inscriptions, together with their doubtful physiognomy. What, then, is the way out? There is no other way for us than to suppose that the south Semitic alphabet shot out from the proto-Semitic alphabet before the Phoenician, Aramaic, and Canaanitic (old-Hebrew) branches originated. Where and when this happened is not certain, though perhaps before the 13th century B.C., to which period the Ahiiram inscription belongs. Here again the Sinaitic alphabet accounts for the 'Vorbild', if not the 'Urbild', from which both the north and south branches came forth. Most of the forms in the Sabaean and other south Semitic alphabets can be connected in some way or other with those in the Sinaitic alphabet. From various considerations it is conceivable that the Phoenicians served as mediators in spreading the alphabet, for they already had, at the time of Amarna letter, a considerable number of trading vessels, and in about the 11th century B.C. theirs was the commercial language of the time. The synchronous debouchment of the Minaeans in south Arabia is remarkable;¹

1. Benzinger: *Hebräische Archäologie*, p. 157-8.

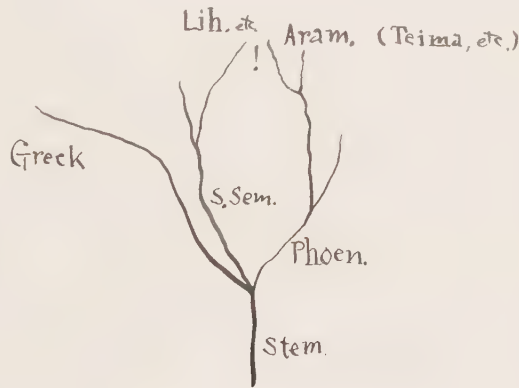
from India to Egypt, and all over the Mediterranean coasts they spread the sphere of their commercial influence; in their north-Arabian province, Musri, they kept their footing to maintain trade with the coast, the main stations being Gaza in the south and Damascus in the north. Is it possible that the Minaeans had acquired the alphabet from the Phoenicians before their debouchment into the commercial field, perhaps at about the time of the Amarna letters? They carried on a flourishing trade. Though it is quite a venture, without any documentary evidence, to bring up the date of the south Semitic alphabet higher than 1200-1000 B.C., yet, the wide disparity between the Ahiiram (1250 B.C.) and the Sabaeian alphabets forces us to assume that the Minaeans may have learned the alphabet, before the time of the Ahiiram inscription, through Phoenician traders. In every respect the alphabet of the Ahiiram inscription seems to belong to the **second** or third stage in the evolution of the prototype, since its physiognomy is properly that of the Phoenician alphabet. We have already discussed the probability that the introduction of the alphabet to Greece occurred earlier than has ever been supposed,

and a date as early as c.1300 B.C. can reasonably be accepted. It is very suggestive that the early Greek alphabet stands, in its general physiognomy, nearer the south Semitic alphabets. Morphologically correct, but historically wrong, Dussaud had pointed out already in 1907 that the early Greek alphabet stands between the north and south Semitic alphabets.¹

Summing up all the foregoing discussions, we may postulate a 'proto-Phoenician' alphabet from which the Ahiram-alphabet and other Phoenician alphabets as well as the south Semitic and the Greek alphabets were all derived. Be it remembered, however, that the Sabaeen alphabet as known to us, is from 800 B.C.; till that time the grand form of the Sabaeen alphabet had been developed through several hundred years of use. We have no convincing evidence against the claim that the Sabaeen alphabet is chronologically much younger than the Phoenician alphabet; but, compared with the early Greek, the former does not show signs of much mutation. If such is the case, the older notion that the south Semitic alphabet retains the more antique form can be

1. Dussaud: *Les Arabes en Syrie avant l'Islam*, Paris, 1907.

admitted to a limited degree. As the Phoenician alphabet known to us, however, is presumably synchronous with the divergence of the south Semitic branch, no scholar to-day regards the southern derivation of the northern group as possible or probable. The whole discussion can be diagrammed as follows:



A striking similarity deserve a notice as found between the Lihyanitic and Aramaic forms, which appears as follows:

	<u>He</u>	<u>Heth</u>
Lih. (North Arabia)	𐤇 𐤈	𐤁 𐤂(!)
Aram. { Teima (Arabia 5-4 cent. B.C.)	𐤇 𐤈 𐤉	𐤁 𐤂 𐤃
Aram. { Egypt. curs. 5-3 cent. B.C.)	𐤇 𐤈 𐤉	𐤁 𐤂
Aram. { Older square (1-4 cent. A.D.)	𐤇 𐤈	𐤁 𐤂
Heb. { Later	𐤇	𐤁

III. PALAEOGRAPHICAL DOUBT ABOUT THE PHOENICIAN ALPHABET

I am inclined to think that the earliest Phoenician alphabet, at the time of differentiation into branches, had undergone some modification in its form. If anything is to be made of the Cretan hypothesis, it may be for this cause.¹ This may, perhaps, be discussed more definitely when the Cretan script is deciphered.

IV. THE SEMITIC ALPHABETS COMPARED ON THE BASIS OF EVOLUTIONARY EVIDENCE

Materials:

Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum (CIS)

Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik, Tafeln, 1898

-Merk Lidzbarski

Geschichte der Schrift, 1925

Hans Jensen

Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte, Berlin, 1928

"Alphabet" in Ency. Brit., 14th edit.

" Jew. Ency.

etc.

1. *Supra*, P. 33-4.

Ahi ram 13th cent. B.C.	ABiba'al 10th cent. B.C.	Mesha 9th cent. B.C.	Zenjirli 8th cent. B.C.
𐤀 𐤁	𐤁	𐤁	𐤁
𐤂 𐤃	𐤂	𐤂	𐤂
𐤄	𐤄	𐤄	𐤄 𐤄
𐤅		𐤅	𐤅
𐤆 𐤇		𐤆	𐤆
𐤈 𐤉		𐤈	𐤈
𐤊		𐤊 𐤊	𐤊 𐤋
𐤌 𐤍		𐤌	𐤌 𐤍
𐤎		𐤎	𐤎 𐤏 𐤏
𐤐		𐤐	𐤐
𐤑	𐤑	𐤑	𐤑
𐤒 𐤓	𐤒	𐤒	𐤒
𐤔		𐤔	𐤔
𐤕		𐤕	𐤕 𐤖
𐤗	𐤗	𐤗	𐤗
𐤘 𐤙	𐤘	𐤘	𐤘
𐤚		𐤚	𐤚
𐤛		𐤛	𐤛 𐤜
𐤝	𐤝	𐤝	𐤝
𐤞		𐤞	𐤞 𐤟
𐤠	𐤠	𐤠	𐤠
𐤡 𐤢		𐤡	𐤡
(𐤣)	𐤣	𐤣	𐤣
(𐤤)		𐤤	𐤤 𐤥 𐤥
𐤦		𐤦	𐤦
𐤧		𐤧	𐤧
𐤨		𐤨	𐤨
𐤩		𐤩	𐤩 𐤪

Fig. 26. Old Phoenician and Old Aramaic.

A. NORTH SEMITIC ALPHABETS COMPARED

a. Old Phoenician and Zenjirli(Aramaic)

Comparing the three texts, Ahiram, Mesha, and Zenjirli, the lines of evolution are clearly observable. It is noteworthy that the text of Zenirli(Aramaic, 8th cent. B.C.) stands closer to the old Phoenician than to that of Eshmun'azar(Middle Phoen. or Sidonian, 6-4th cent. B.C.). The latter shows a tendency toward cursive which developed more strongly later in the Punic and neo-Punic.

Aleph. *Aleph* in the text of Ahiram is outstanding —
 K , K . Though the head of an ox is not any more observable, the curved horns springing from a common base are remarkable. Between the texts of Ahiram and Abiba'al the trace of evolution is marked. The use of a calamus reed may have caused the prototype of the letter to be drawn in one stroke, so that the sharp angle extended out to the left across the vertical line. The same form is found in the text of Mesha, while, in the inscriptions of Nora¹(9th cent. B.C.) and Zenjirli the angle is found less sharp.

1. *Supra*, p. 61.

Gimel. *Gimel* of 'Ahiram' is characterized by its vertical posture(𐤂), while the oblique direction is preferred from Abiba'al and Mesha downward — 𐤂, 𐤂, etc.

Daleth. *Daleth* is not found in the text of Ahiram on the sarcophagus, but on the other text on the southern wall within the shaft. The sign is drawn as a nearly equilateral triangle 𐤃, which is kept also in the Mesha text in a smaller size 𐤃. From Zanjirli and Abiba'al onward the right side is extended downward thus 𐤃, and confusion begins to arise between *daleth* and *resh*.

He. There are two forms of *he* in the Ahiram inscription: in one form the vertical line surpasses the bottom line(𐤄), and in the other it does not(𐤄). The is nowhere else to be found except in the very late Maccabaeen, Hasmonaeen, and Revolt coins!

Vav. In the Ahiram inscription the sign does not differ from that in 'Mesha', except that the end of the vertical line is bent leftward at the bottom(𐤆). The Zanjirli *Vav*(𐤆) already shows the tendency of later forms — 𐤆 𐤆 𐤆 𐤆 𐤆.

Heth. There are two signs for *heth* as in the

case of *he*. In one form the two vertical lines pass over the two outer horizontal lines(), and in the other they do not(). The latter form is found only in the text of Nora(9th cent.B.C.),and also in the Maccabaeae,Hasmonaeae,and Revolt coins. The fact that the later Jewish coins take older forms is noteworthy. Can it be that the old forms were intentionally preferred to the contemporary vulgar style because of the patriotic and retrospective spirit of the time?

Teth and *tav*. The upright position of the cross mark is characteristic of the Ahiham *teth* and *tav* ( , )¹, while it is put in the oblique position in the text of Mesha and others( , ); and, in Zenjirli the Andrew's cross changes its feature by having one bar shorter than the other(). *Teth* of oval shape is first found in the Zenjirli().

Yod. *Yod* is distinctive in the Ahiham. The upper portion drawn in a smooth curve() is evenly placed on the horizontal line(), and the size is comparatively large. Notice, this form has never been found since then, except in the Maccabaeae and the Hasmonaeae coins. The Moabite *yod*() is typically rectilinear, having the long tail going upward. In

¹ So in CIS I 5.

Zenjirli it is more curved and oblique in its position ().

Kaph. *Kaph* keeps the same form through the Ahiram and the Abiba'al (), but one century after the latter it is found with the long arm familiar to us (). After the passing of another century this long arm almost determines its form in the Zenjirli (), and more particularly so in the Middle Phoenician ().

Mem. *Mem* in both the Ahiram and the Abiba'al inscriptions stands upright (); a decided advance is perceived on the Mesha Stone (). The form in the Zenjirli is half way between the two ().

Samekh. It is noticeable that one of the two forms of this letter in the Zenjirli inscriptions already suggests the way to cursive (). In the Middle Phoenician the three horizontal lines are connected ( , so ).

'Ayin. The circular sign is proportionally larger in the Ahiram inscription than in others, i.e.,  cf  .

Pe. In the text of Ahiram the form is merely a gently curved line ( , ), and not angular (Mesha - )

or rounded(Nora,etc. 9) at the top.

Sade. *Sade* is not found in the text of Ahiram. The form in the Abiba'al inscription, however, appears in a primitive form ().

Kesh. Tracing the direction of the downward line of the letter, the process of evolution can be perceived as shown below:

- | | | |
|------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Ahiram |  |  |
| 2. Mesha |  | |
| 3. Zenjirli |  | |
| 4. Eshmun'azar(Sidon.) |  | |

In no.1 the arrow is directed toward the left at the bottom; in no.2 the line is just perpendicular; in no.3 it tends a little to the right, while, in no.4, the definite slant to the right determines its feature, hence the confusion with *daleth*:

Daleth 

Kesh 

Shin. This letter kept its form throughout the Old Phoenician alphabets ().

Tav. *Tav* has been discussed together with *teth*.

As to the less important inscriptions such as the

Sardinian, Carthagenean, and the Martan they will not be discussed here.

b. Middle Phoenician and Punic compared

Two remarkable inscriptions in the Middle Phoenician or Sidonian-style have been discovered in Saïda, Syria, in the neighborhood of ancient Sidon. One of them is found in great sarcophagus of King Tabnith, who ruled in Sidon during the short renaissance of her last national period, after the city had been sacked by the Persian hordes under Artaxerxes Ochus (352 B.C.), when 40000 Sidonians are said to have burned themselves alive in their houses rather than be tortured to death by the enemy. The other one is inscribed on the monolithic sarcophagus of Ishmun'azar II, king of Sidon, son of Tabnith. Both bear every evidence of the technical skill of the Sidonian engraver, especially the latter, which is one of the very finest examples of Phoenician palaeography.

As to the date of the inscription of Ba'al Lebanon there are naturally two different opinions. If the Hiram mentioned in this inscription is the Hiram of

King Solomon's time, the inscription may date from the beginning of the 10th century B.C. On the other hand, in 741, Tiglath-Pileser III mentions on his tribute-lists "Hirum of Tyre"; so the inscription is associated with the period of Tiglath-Pileser by G.A.Cooke.¹

Both dates are conceivable. Be that as it may, this inscription is written in the Tyrian style; if we take the later date, there would be no objection to classifying this script with the Old Phoenician, which is quite decisive on this point. The displacement of the Tyrian style by the Sidonian style can be ascribed to the political upheavals in Phoenicia. After the siege of Tyre, the king appointed by Nebuchadrezzar was Baal II (574-564), after whose death a republic was formed under a single *suffete* (DEW). Then the monarchy was revived, and at length under Hiram III Phoenicia passed from the Chaldaeans to Persians (538). The intrusion of foreign powers and subsequent civil disorders had exhausted Tyre, and Sidon took its place as the leading state. Owing to such changes in the political situation, the Sidonian style may have been preferred to the Tyrian style.

1. Ency. Brit. 14th edit., p. 767.

As the inscription of Eshmun'azar perhaps belongs to the past period of the Sidonian influence, the style shows the most elegant and flowing feature among the Phoenician alphabets, at the same time exposing itself to the approaching danger of cursive degeneration which had already acquired a foothold in Carthage.

After leaving the mother country the script acquires a more cursive flowing style on the stones from Cyprus and Attica; the tendency becomes more strongly marked at the Punic stage; until in the neo-Punic, from the destruction of Carthage (146 B.C.) to the 1st century A.D., when both the writing and the language reached their most degenerate form, as it appears as follows:



Let us continue to use the name Sidonian for the Middle Phoenician alphabet. Comparing the Sidonian with the Punic and the neo-Punic, we can clearly tell that it is the mother of the degenerate son and grandson, grand and gracious as the Sidonian mother looks. In the Sidonian, principal divergences from the primitive Old Phoenician alphabet are most marked in the following letters:

<i>Aleph</i>	
<i>Gimel</i>	
<i>Zain</i>	
<i>Teth</i>	
<i>Yod</i>	
<i>Kaph</i>	
<i>Lamed</i>	
<i>Mem</i>	
<i>Samekh</i>	
<i>Loph</i>	
<i>Shin</i>	
<i>Tau</i>	

Most of the letters are written obliquely in either of the two directions, e.g., , , ; *teth* became

oval in shape as in the Zenjirli, so opening the way to the Punic form(); *kaph* began to become deformed, leaving only a slight suggestion of something like the fingers of its previous form; *lamed* began to flow(); *mem* is drawn in two or three strokes, with the middle one put in, perhaps afterwards; *samekh* is rippled(); *qoph* is drawn in a cursive hand(); *shin* is ground smooth at the bottom(); and *tav* is also remarkable (), dearly foretelling the Punic degeneration.

When we come to the neo-Punic, the degeneration is extreme; so that the simplest forms of *beth*, *daleth*, *lamed*, *pe*, *resh*, can hardly be told from each other, i.e.,
 , etc.

Zenjirli	Nerab
¢	¢
9	9
^	^
Δ	Δ
≡	≡
4	4
⊥ z	~
⊞ ⊞	⊞ ⊞
⊗ ⊗ ⊙	⊙
≈	≈
≠	≠
ℓ	ℓ
⚡	⚡
⚡	⚡
≡ ≡	≡ ≡
○	○
∩	∩
⌞	⌞
⊕ ⊕ ⊕	⊕
q	q
w	w
× ×	×

Fig. 28. Zenjili and Nerab.

c. Old Aramaic(Zenjirli,etc.)

The oldest Aramaic inscriptions consist chiefly of the three large ones found around Girgin and Zenjirli in north Syria about 1890. Among them the Hadad inscription is the oldest, belonging to the first half of the 8th century B.C. This first branch of the Aramaic script is sometimes represented by the name 'Zenjirli'. The Zenjirli script stands close in its ductus to the Old Phoenician, as has been already been pointed out.¹ The inscription from Nerab in north Syria really belongs to the 7th century B.C.² Though not much difference is found between the latter and the former, yet, there are some distinctions as shown below in the order of importance:

Heth *Heth* has two forms( ), one of which has only the single cross line.

Kaph. In *kaph* the angle is changed to a wedge ( → ) as it is in the Sidonian script of Eshmun-'azar(4th cent.B.C.).

Samekh. The three horizontal lines are diminished cursively to two().

1. Supra, p.161ff.

2. Cf. Geschichte der Schrift by Jensen, 1925, p.121.

Zain. *Zain* stands on its side($\sim$) in contrast to that of the *Zenjirli*($\pm z$).

Vav. *Vav* gains a rounder shape at the top in the downward curve($\cup$), likewise the *mem*(γ).

Qoph. The head of *qoph* becomes more round(Φ).

Daleth. and *Resh.* Notice the round shape of *daleth*($\mathcal{A}$); here again it is hardly distinguishable from *resh*($\mathcal{A}$).

Except some differences as shown above, the general impression which we get from these two inscriptions, *Zenjirli* and *Nerab*, is that they are one accord in keeping pace with the Old Phoenician.

d. Palmyrene and Syriac

In contrast to the *Zenjirli* or the Old Aramaic, the Middle Aramaic represented by the Palmyrene-Syriac shows great divergences from the Old Phoenician. Most of the Palmyrene inscriptions have been found in the once flourished Palmyra¹ which represented the Hellenistic-Semitic civilization in Syria, and was destroyed by the Romans in 273 A.D. Those inscriptions belong

1. A few inscriptions, however, were found, not only in Palmyra but also in north Africa, Italy, Hungary, and even in England in 1978.

mostly to the time king Odaïnathos and Queen Zenobia, perhaps between 266-273 A.D. There is, however, an older, less ornate grave-inscription dating certainly from 9 B.C.* The Palmyrene script, with its angular, ornamental characters, stands in contrast to the less ornate Aramaic-Hebrew, though both are close to *

each other. Basing his inference on the dragging edge, or tail, of the letters, Jensen, in his *Geschichte der Schrift*,¹ calls Ⲁ attention to the fact

ⲛⲥ ⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ
ⲉⲁⲏⲁⲛⲏ ⲛⲥⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ
ⲛⲥⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ ⲛⲥⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ
ⲛⲥⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ ⲛⲥⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ
ⲛⲥⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ ⲛⲥⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ
ⲛⲥⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ ⲛⲥⲁⲣⲏⲁⲛⲏ

that this is not a script

developed for use on monuments,

but in manuscripts. But more than this, the ligation of letters, which has been splendidly developed in Syriac, must be noticed.²

The confusion of the shapes of the letters is great in this script: e.g.,

Beth(Ⲛ) and kaph(Ⲛ); daleth(Ⲛ) and resh(Ⲛ);
beth(Ⲛ) and sade(Ⲛ); mem(Ⲛ) and ooph(Ⲛ).

The medial form of nun(Ⲛ) stands closer to the old

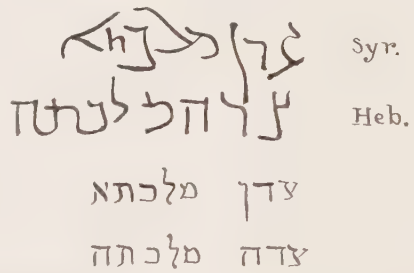
1. p. 126.

2. Lidzbarski: *Nordsem. Epigr. Tafeln* (loc. cit.); Jensen, p. 126-7.

form of the letter than its final form does(**ܐ**).

By carefully comparing the Palmyrene script with the Syriac, especially the old Syriac script of Zabal, we can clearly tell that the latter had been derived from the former.¹ A bilingual inscription belonging to the beginning of our era has been found in the Tomb of Queen Šaddan.² Therefore, if the Syriac has been derived from the Palmyrene script, the latter must have been in use long before that time.

The first Palmyrene inscription, however, comes only from 9 B.C.; therefore, the monumental



Syr.
Heb.

Fig. 29. Grave-inscription of Queen Šaddan.

evidence is nearly simultaneous with the Syriac. But, from the palaeographical point of view the priority of the Palmyrene cursive to the Syriac is undoubted, although Taylor had wrongly denied the relationship between the two.³ The resemblance between the Palmyrene cursive and the Syriac text in the grave-inscription

1. Jensen, p. 126.

2. *ibid.*

3. Taylor: *The History of the Alphabet I*, 1883, p. 285.

of Queen Šaddan allows no doubt to arise. We must not think, however, that

the so-called

Estrangelo¹ was

directly developed

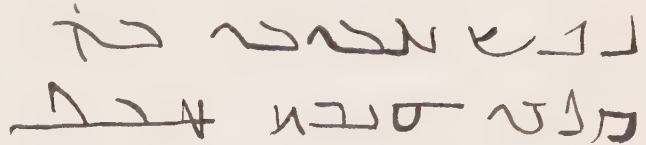


Fig. 30. Palmyrene Grave inscription from Italy

from the Palmyrene, for a decided difference between the two scripts can be observed. To fill up the gap the trilingual inscription² found in 1879 in *Zebed*, dating from 512 A.D., is given by the recent scholars,³ though not given by Lidzbarski in his ingenious attempt to connect the two scripts. (Handbuch, p. 194). This script from *Zebed* is now called by scholars *Old Syriac*, because it stands in its form between the Palmyrene and the Estrangelo; the following comparison will settle the problem:

1. Oldest Syriac manuscript written in 411 A.D. (Brit. Mus.)

2. About details see, Sachau in: Monastber. d. preuss. Ak. 1881, S. 169ff. and ZDMG 36, 1882, S. 345ff.; Praetorius, id. 35, 1881, S. 530ff.

3. Ball: Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte, 11er Band, Tafel, 110.

	Palmyrene	Old Syriac	Estrangelo
ālaph	Ⲁ	Ⲁ	Ⲁ
bēth	Ⲃ	Ⲃ	Ⲃ
gāmal	Ⲅ		Ⲅ
dālath	Ⲇ	Ⲇ	Ⲇ
hē	Ⲉ(Ⲉ)	Ⲉ	Ⲉ
vau	Ⲋ	Ⲋ ⲋ	Ⲋ
Zain, Zen, Zai	Ⲍ		Ⲍ
hēth	Ⲏ	Ⲏ	Ⲏ
tēth	Ⲑ	Ⲑ	Ⲑ
yōdh	Ⲓ	Ⲓ	Ⲓ
kāph	Ⲕ	Ⲕ	Ⲕ ⲕ
lāmadh	Ⲗ	Ⲗ	Ⲗ
mīm	Ⲙ	Ⲙ	Ⲙ ⲙ
nūn	Ⲛ ⲛ	Ⲛ ⲛ	Ⲛ ⲛ
semkath	Ⲝ	Ⲝ	Ⲝ
ē	Ⲟ	Ⲟ	Ⲟ
pē	Ⲡ	Ⲡ	Ⲡ
ṣādhē	Ⲣ		Ⲣ
qōph	Ⲥ	Ⲥ	Ⲥ
rēsh	Ⲧ	Ⲧ	Ⲧ
shīn	Ⲩ	Ⲩ ⲩ	Ⲩ
tau	Ⲭ	Ⲭ	Ⲭ

Fig. 31. Palmyrene, Old Syriac, and Estrangelo.

In the Palmyrene monuments an interesting effort ~~to~~ to draw the letter as far as possible in one cursive movement, without a middle break or many angles, can be traced through various stages. The outcome of this tendency is the Syriac script.

Aleph. The Palmyrene *aleph* is drawn in three strokes (), while they can easily be reduced to two strokes: , ,  (Old Syr.),  (Estr.). In the Sertā it is set upright and drawn in one stroke:
 } = (, or ).

Beth. The Palmyrene *y* can be drawn more easily like  . Old Syr.  , Estr.  , Sert.  are all drawn with an easier movement.

Gimel. The Palmyrene *λ* can be  . In the Estrangelo script the position is changed (), and more smoothly drawn in the Sertā ().

Daleth. In the old Syriac *y* is much simplified (), then  in the Estrangelo, which is more simplified in the Sertā ( !).

He. How can  (Palmy.) and  (old Syr.) be connected? Suppose  was sometimes drawn in one movement (), then  can naturally be obtained.
 =  =  (Sertā). Also  =  (Nestor.).

Vav. From  (Palmy.) to  (old Syr.), and to  (Estr.), and to  (Sert.).

Zain.  became  (Sert.), distinguished from *aleph* by its shorter length.

Heth.  became  in the old Syriac, whence the regular .

Teth.  to  or .

Yodh.  to , and the position gradually became lower.

Kaph.  to  (old Syr.), or to  and  (Estr.).

In  the boldness of stroke prevents bedding of the tail to the left as in the Palmyrene script ().

 is sometimes hardly distinguishable from *beth* () except by its smaller size.

Lamedh.  to  and , or  as the final form.

Mem. Between  (Palmy.) and  (Estr.) stands  (old Syr.) By optical illusion  and  are obtained (Sert.).

Nun.  (Palmy.) is simplified to  (old Syr.), and  to , then ,  (Estr.).

Samekh. The Palmyrene form () probably had been  with which the Syriac form can be associated ().

‘Ayin. Y (Palmy,) can be drawn in short hand: > .

By merely changing the position the Syriac form is obtained (Δ), which as end letter changes, as in the case of *lamedh*, to Λ . The shape is hardly distinguishable from *lamedh* except by its smaller size.

Pe. 3 (Palmy.) can be drawn in this manner 3 .
Written in cursive: 3 , Δ ! (Syr.).

Sade. Suppose H were put in an oblique position Λ (Palmy.), and then, compare with the Syriac form (Σ).

Qoph. N (Palmy.) is written in one movement: D (Syr.). The shape became smaller.

Resh. Owing to the similarity of *resh* (Y) to *daleth* (Y) the same forms are obtained: 7 or 7̇ , 7̇ , the distinction being the position of the dot.

Shin. V (Palmy.) changed its position: V , and the horizontal line has been lengthened toward the left: X . Notice the extreme simplification: A (Sert.).

Tau. h to Syriac h . Suppose a more simplified form of the latter: h , l , l ; then, at last, the other form is obtained: $\text{L} = \text{L}$ (Sert.).

On the basis of the Estrangelo (derivation doubtful, but possibly from στρογγύλη "round") two types of script were gradually developed, namely, the east Syriac (Nestorian) and the west Syriac or the Sertā which had been used by the Monophysites and the Jacobites. The latter is more round in appearance than the others.¹ The former script had been carried by Christian missionaries to central Asia, India, and even to China.²

Lastly, the name 'Malkite script' remains to be mentioned. About the 6th century B.C. the Syrians in Palestine had split away from the northern adherents of Jacob Aradaeus, the bishop of Edessa, and developed a peculiar script which is partly Estrangelic and partly Jacobitic.³ Older manuscripts come down from 6-7th centuries A.D., and the later from 11-14th centuries A.D. The older form is called the Malkite uncial, Jerusalemite, or Syro-Palestinian.

1. *Infra*, p. 183.

2. D. Chwolson: *Syrisch-Nestorianische Grabinschriften*, *Mém. Acad. Impér. St. Petersburg* 7. Serie 37, 1890, mit *Schrifttafel von Euting*; *ibid.* 1897; *For the Chinese-Nestorian inscr. from Si-Ngan-Fu, 781 A.D.*, Lidzbarski, *Handbuch* S. 499.

3. *Infra*, p. 183.

Vowel points were already invented in the Estrangelo: $\dot{\bar{a}}$, $\dot{\bar{a}}$, $\bar{\bar{e}}$, or $\dot{\bar{e}}$, etc.¹ After the beginning of the 8th century the other system is found in the west Syria, which is based upon the Greek letters: $\overset{\wedge}{\bar{a}}$, $\overset{9}{\bar{a}}$ o($\bar{a}$), $\overset{3}{\bar{e}}$, $\overset{2}{\bar{e}}$, $\overset{2}{\bar{e}}$, $\overset{2}{\bar{e}}$ or $\overset{2}{\bar{e}}$ $\bar{u}$, $\bar{u}$, etc.

e. Nabataean and Arabic

The Nabataeans were Arabs — as their proper names show — who came under Aramaic influence. They developed a peculiar style of writing on the basis of the Aramaic script. A good comparison can be between it and the Palmyrene. From the cursive Nabataean script the Arabic writing has been developed. The history of the Nabataeans will be given in the following brief account.

The Nabataeans were a nomad people who extended from the Sinaitic peninsula towards north Arabia up to the region of Transjordan. The history of the Nabataeans cannot be carried back beyond 312 B.C., at which date they were attacked in their mountain fortress of Petra without success, by Antigonos I. During the Hellenistic period the tribe grew into a kingdom, and

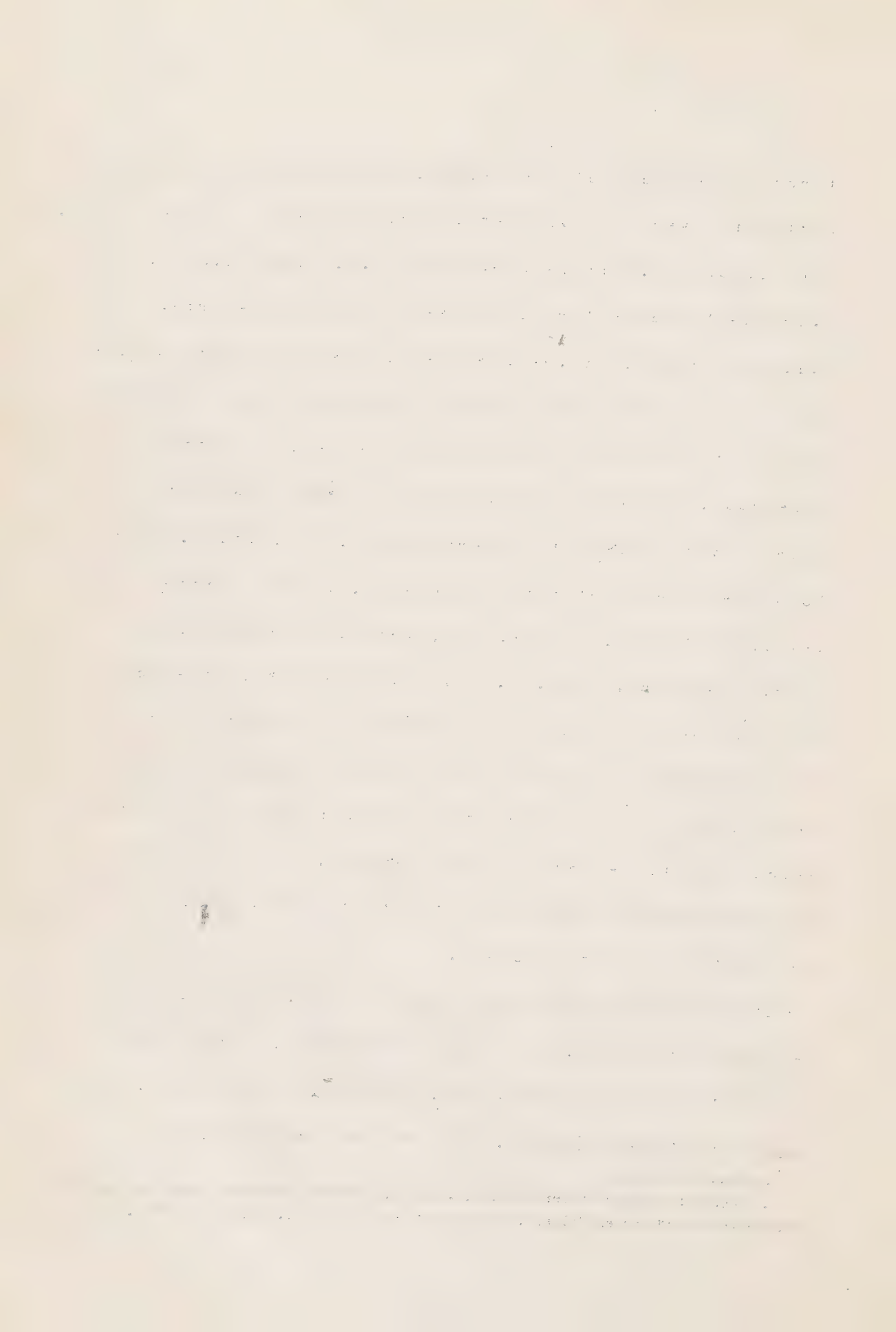
////

1. Detailed in Nöldeke: Syrische Grammatik § aff.; Brockelmann: Syrische Gramm. S. 2.

through the decay of the Seleucids extended its borders northward over the more fertile country east of the Jordan. They occupied Hauran, and about 85 B.C. their king Aretas (Harithah) became lord of Damascus and Coele-Syria. Allies of the first Hasmonaeans in their struggle against the Greeks (I Macc. v. 25, ix. 85; 2 Macc. v. 8), they became the rivals of the Judaeen dynasty in the period of its splendour, and also a chief element in the disorders which invited Pompey's intervention in Palestine. The Roman arms were not very successful, and King Aretas retained his whole possession, including Damascus, as a Roman vassal (cf. 2 Cor. xi. 32). As "allies" of the Romans the Nabataeans continued to flourish throughout the first Christian century. Their power extended far into Arabia, particularly along the Red Sea; especially Petra which a meeting-place of many nations. The Nabataean Kingdom lasted perhaps from 150 ^{B.C.} to 105 A.D. until it was destroyed by the Romans.

The Nabataean coins and inscriptions, mostly from the Hellenistic period,¹ have been discovered in all those regions; and they circulated, especially from Petra, the center of their kingdom. In several inscriptions,

1. Jensen : Geschichte der Schrift, p. 129; Lidzbarski: Handbuch, S. 194ff.; L. Schärer: Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi I. 2-4, 1901, S. 726ff.



especially in the one from Hauran¹, the original form of the Aramaic script is still observable.

Fig. 33. Nabataean Inscr. of Hamrat, from Hauran.

But, in most of the Nabataean inscriptions, even in those coming out from the same place, the decided development from the mother script is to be seen clearly.²

The characteristic of the Nabataean script is its increased ligations. Letters are very frequently connected at the bottom toward the left, with each other.³ The Sinaitic inscriptions (to be distinguished from the Sinai inscriptions), dating from the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd cent. A.D., show abundant examples of this practice.⁴

Fig. 34. Sinaitic Nabataean.

Thus in the Nabataean script the first step in the direction of a marked development of ligation was taken. This is seen in its later development in the Arabic writing.

-
1. Lidzbarski: Handbuch, Tf. XXIX. 1; Jensen: Gesch. d. Schr., P. 128.
 2. Lidzbarski: ibid. XXIX-XXXVI.
 3. Euting: Nabatäische Inschriften, 1895.
 4. Lidzbr.: Tf. XXXIV-XXXVI.

The oldest Arabic inscription, and the grave-inscription of Mar'alkais from en-Nemara(328 A.D.) are still written in the Nabataean script.¹

The oldest Arabic forms are to be found in the trilingual inscription(Greek-Syriac-Arabic) from Zebed(512 A.D.), and, also in the bilingual inscription(Greek-Arabic) found in Harran, south of Damascus(568 A.D.). By the uprising of Islam the new Arabic script was spread about; and it seems that, already in the 6th century A.D., it had received acceptance in Hidjaz. From the 7th and 8th centuries come several coins(from 641 A.D.-), several Papyrus manuscripts, and also several inscriptions such as that of Abd el-Melik in *Qubbet-es-sahara* in Jerusalem. As for details about other inscriptions we can look to Lidzbadski, as the older, and Jensen(1925), as the latest authority.

Already in older inscriptions there are certain differences to be seen between the more angular and rounder scripts; the latter is especially remarkable in the

1. Faksimile in Rev. Arch. 41, 1902, II 411; Dussaud: Les Arabes en Syrie 1907 S. 34ff.

papyrus manuscripts. This difference was carried out more extremely, until in the 8th and the 9th centuries the script bifurcated into two types of writing, namely, *Kufic* (after the city *Kufa*) and *Nashi*. Different other types, according to the lands and the periods have been developed, such as Magribic, Persian, Sulus, Rik'a, etc.¹

As the less important offshoot of the Nabataean script, beside the Arabic, the Mandaean alphabet² is known to us; it was used by the sect of that name, who lived in the marshy regions south of Babylon.

Observations on the Nabataean forms

Aleph. The Palmyrene *aleph* is , and the Sinaitic forms are , , . The first one of the latter seems to be keeping the original form:  to . Then, the second one has the two lines combined into one stroke ( to ), and after that attaches a loop (), or two short bars (). The standard Nabataean form, instead of , has a full loop (, ). In the sign

1. Ahlwardt: Zwölf arab. Schrift-Tafeln; Enzyklopädie des Islam I 399ff. . Moritz; ib. Arabic palaeography; WZKM 5, 1891, S. 320ff. J. Karabacek; C. H. Becker: Papyri Schottreinhardt I (Veröffentl. aus d. Heidelberger Papyrus-Sammlung III 1, 1906, S. 24ff.; M. v. Berchem: Matériaux pour un corpus inscriptionum Arabicarum I-II.

2. Noldeke: Mandäische Grammatik, 1875.

of *aleph*, in general, the leftward stroke (/) has never been its main part, and yet, in hand writing, this calligraphic stroke is highly favored. In the old Arabic script from Zebed the medial form is found(/), while, in one of the Sinaitic forms one stroke(/) is already used to signify the whole thing.

Beth. In the Sinaitic script a Palmyrenic *beth* is found(); it soon lost the head(), for in the standard Nabataean it is found so(, ). In the former a conventionalized form is found(), so in the Kufic(7th cent. A.D.) in a settled state(). In the old Arabic the leftward, horizontal line is lengthened(, ), whence, the later forms in Nashi(, , ).

Gimel. In the forms of *gimel* the two bars are not forgotten throughout: Nab.(, ), Sin.(, , ), old Arab.(, ); and, at last, in the papyri the swing of the leftward line is directed in a smooth curve downward with the end turned to the right(, , , , ,).

Daleth and *resh*. The Nabataean form retains the standard Semitic form(, ), though it is made more cursive in the Sinaitic script(), so as to be confused with one of the forms of the Nabataean *beth*(, ).¹

1. Jensen: *Geschichte der Schrift*, p. 129.

Thus, the foundation for the later Arabic form is laid here.

He. One of the two Nabataean forms is just like the quadrate Hebrew: π . In the other form the bottom is connected from the left to the right ($\cup$). In the Kufic form the direction is changed (Δ), so making a good connection with one of the Arabic forms ($\&$). In the Sinaitic inscription it is again drawn in an ingenious style ($\delta, \perp$) which is modified in the Kufic (⦿); whence the other Arabic form may be derived (⦿).

Vav. The Aramaic form (γ) is generally kept in all of the related scripts: Nab. (η, ϑ), Sin. (η, ϑ), Kufic (ϑ), Karamatic (⤵), Arab. (old ϑ , late و). In the Karamatic form we see the Phoenician *beth*!

Zain. In the Nabataean and the Sinaitic scripts the form is just that of *aleph* in its later development ($|$). In the later forms it is curved and dotted: Arab. (old ز , late ز).

Beth. In the Nabataean, the original form is still kept (⦿). In the Sinaitic form the upper left is not recognizable ($\text{⦿}, \text{⦿}$), then it changes the position in the old Arabic (⦿), then, in the Nashi: ⦿ . It was good

for the Moslems that they distinguished three sounds by one sign: ⲗ , ⲛ , ⲏ .

Teth. The open form of the Aramaic (ⲧ) is shut in the Nabataean (ⲃ), and this is kept throughout. At last, arises the Arabic ⲃ .

Yod. To distinguish it from *beth* (ⲃ), the letter has two dots already in the Maghribi script, whence the Arabic form (ⲃ).

Kaph. *Kaph* (Ⲅ) is closely related to the quadrate script. In the Arabic form (Ⲅ , ⲅ) it can be related to the Hebrew *mem*, and, finally, it has been developed to Ⲅ .

Lamedh. There is hardly any necessity of discussing this letter.

Mem. The Palmyrene form (Ⲅ) was developed in the Syriac to Ⲅ . But, the Nabataean form resembles the former and quadrate form (Ⲅ); then comes the old Arabic (Ⲅ , ⲅ), and finally, the Nashi (Ⲅ ⲅ).

Nun. The Nabataean form (Ⲇ) is developed into a shape the same as *ba* (ⲃ) and *ya* (ⲃ) in the Arabic, therefore, it is distinguished from those two by one dot above it (Ⲇ).

Samekh. In the Nabataean the form (Ⲇ) is just

like the Middle Phoenician and Punic *qoph* (𐤑, 𐤒), while, in the Kufic and others the real Aramaic form is revived in a different position (𐤒, 𐤓). At last, the Arabic form (س).

‘Ayin. The Aramaic form is ʕ = ʕ, hence the Palmyrene ʕ. Midway in its evolution it is slightly modified for the sake of ligation (𐤕); at last, in the Arabic the top is connected (𐤕), and then ʕ.

Pe. In the Nabataean the form (𐤐) is nearly like *vav* (𐤕). But, the former has the lower end a little bent to the left. Confusion, however, was likely to arise with *vav*; therefore, on the way to the Arabic script it acquired a dot above it (𐤐).

Sade. The cursive form of the Aramaic *sade* (𐤔) is that of the Nabataean (𐤔). In the Kufic it is 𐤔; in the Maghribi it is 𐤔, the Arabic form (س) has thus been obtained.

Qoph. In the Nabataean script the form is hardly distinguishable from *sade*, though the open form (𐤑) of the latter is shut in the former (𐤑). Later, *sade* happened to have a larger head (𐤑), and the latter a smaller (𐤑). To prevent its confusion with *pe* or *fa*



two dots have been put above it: ڦ.

Resh. *Resh* is already simplified in the Nabataean (𐤓), whence the Arabic *ra* is derived (ر).

Shin. 𐤑 and 𐤒 are essentially identical with each other; therefore, in the Arabic, *samekh* is involved in *sin* (س). *Sin* (س) can be *Shin* (ش). The Kufic form (𐬪, 𐬫) can be connected with the Nabataean form in some way or other, though the gap is quite wide (𐤑, 𐤒, 𐤓).

Tav. The Aramaic form (𐤐) is found in the Syriac slightly modified (ܬ). The connection between the Nabataean and the Arabic forms is inconceivable at a glance. Perhaps the vertical line in the Nabataean *teth* (𐤑, 𐤒) has been omitted and the position may have been changed from 𐤑 to 𐤒. To distinguish it from *ba* (𐤁, 𐤂), *na* (𐤓, 𐤔), *ya* (𐤕, 𐤖) two dots have been put above it (𐤑̣̣, 𐤒̣̣).

f. Old Hebrew, Samaritan and Square-Hebrew

All these groups are included under 'Hebrew' in our classification. The largest inscription in the Old Hebrew is the Siloam inscription apparently dating from the time of Hezekiah (c. 700 B.C.; cf. Is. 22:11). Beside this, our further knowledge must be obtained from short legends on seal and gems (9-5 cent. B.C.) as well as from the Maccabaean (2 cent. B.C.) and Hasmonaean (1 cent. B.C.) coins. It is a noteworthy fact that the Jewish coin was engraved in very old Hebrew characters, in spite of the fact that the Aramaic square character was quite developed at that time. The patriotic and retrospective spirit of the time may have preferred such an old Hebrew style because of its connection with the glorious independence of the past. The same phenomenon is seen in the coins from the time of the revolt against the Romans (e.g. that of Bar-Kochba c. 130 A.D.). The letters, *he* and *heth* (𐤅, 𐤆), for example, are found nowhere else except in the inscriptions of Ahiiram and Nora!

The displacement of the Old Hebrew by the Aramaic quadrate script must have begun sometime between 6-4th cent. B.C. along with the Aramaic influence among the

Jews.¹ The real development may have taken place between the 4th and the 2nd centuries B.C.

While the old Hebrew was gradually displaced by the influence of the Aramaic quadrate script, it can be pursued in the Samaritan script. No Samaritan manuscript exists which antedates the beginning of our era. The oldest extant inscription in this script comes from between 5-6 cent.A.D. It seems that the Samaritan script was developed during the exile by the remaining Jews, and, on the other hand, the quadrate Hebrew was brought back from Chaldaea.¹

1. According to the Jewish-Christian tradition the square alphabet was introduced to Judaea by Ezra or by the people at his time. Cf. Babyl. Talmud, Sanhedrin f. 21b:

במקורו נכתב תורה ליהודה בכתב, כתיב, בלשון עברית ונכתב
בימי עזרא בכתב אשרית ולשון אמרי ביררו להן לישראל כתב
אשרית ובלשון עברית ונכתב בלשון עברית ונכתב
בשון הדיוטות אמר ר' חסדא כותאי מאי כתב עברית אמר ר' חסדא
כתב ליבונא:

Cf. also Origenes, edit. Migne II, col. 1104:

Φασί γὰρ τὸν Ἑσδραν ἐν τῇ αἰχμαλωσίᾳ ἐτέτους χαρακτήρας
παρὰ τοὺς προτέτους παραδεδοκέναι. Hieronimus: Prologus
galeantus, Vulgata edit. Antwerpen 1690, f. 5a:

*Certumque est, Esdram scribam, legisque doctorem, post
captam Ierosolymam & instaurationem templi sun Zorobabel,
alias literas reperisse, quibus nunc utimur: cum ad illud
usque tempus iidem Samaritanorum & Hebraeorum characteres
fuerint. Cf. Bleek-Wellhausen, Einleitung in das Alte
Testament, p. 581ff.*

If the quadrate script had been developed in Palestine during the exile, because many Aramaic-speaking peoples came into Palestine, then, the less Aramaic script of the Samaritans remains unexplained. If a very late development is to be presumed for the Samaritan script, the whole of Palestine must be supposed to have come under the influence of the Aramaic script all at once during the time of captivity. May we not suppose that the more Hebraic script of the Samaritans was the outcome of the revival movement and their scorn of the quadrate script of the Jews?

An observation on the forms

In the Hebrew branch of the alphabet as a whole the letters are generally broader, e.g. *zain* (𐤆), *sade* (𐤑).

Aleph. When the Phoenician *aleph* is changed into the Siloam form (𐤀), the Samaritan form is easily obtained from it (𐤀, 𐤀, 𐤀). Maccabaeen *t* and Revolt *K* are peculiar.

Daleth. and Hesh. The Maccabaeen *daleth* (𐤃) is like *resh*, though the latter is distinguished from the

former by having a round head(9). But, as the second form(9) in the Maccabaeae is like *resh*, it can easily be confused with it.

He. The old form of *he*(Ξ) on the Jewish coins has already been discussed. The Hasmonaean coins have curious forms($\aleph, \P$). The second one may easily be confused with the second form of *daleth*($\P$) on the Maccabaeae coins and *resh*($\P$).

1900.

Siloam	γ
Macc.	x ⚡
Easir.	z x i i
Revolt	h y i z γ x n t f
Lamar.inscr.	s x h

The above illustrates the great number of varieties.

Zain. In the old Hebrew the shape is broad (𐤆). The form on the Revolt coins (𐤆, 𐤆) is very curious. Can 𐤆 become 𐤆, to which the Samaritan forms can be related (𐤆, 𐤆)? This seems most likely.

Heth. The old forms on the coins has been already discussed.

teth. The Samaritan *teth* (𐤌) approximate to the quadrare script (cf. Teima 𐤌, Egypt. Curs. 𐤌, 𐤌).

Kaph. In the Hebrew seals and gems (9-5 cent. B.C.) both the Old and Middle Phoenician forms are found (𐤊 𐤋 𐤍). Not much changed, the Siloam form (𐤊) is a peculiar one. The Hasmonaean forms (𐤊 𐤋 𐤍) are like *beth* in the Nabataean, but corresponds to the same letter in the Palmyrene (𐤊).

In *lamedh*, *mem*, *nun*, *samekh*, *'ayin*, *pe* not many variations are found. An exception is the Samaritan *samekh* (𐤌, 𐤍).

qoph. This letter on the Maccabaeen coins is like that of the quadrate script (𐤑 𐤒).

Shin. On some of the Hasmonaean coins a curious type is found (𐤓 𐤔).

Tav. In the Siloam form the upper left is a little bent to the right (𐤕).

V. TRACES OF THE JOURNEY

In our foregoing discussions the north Semitic alphabets have been pointed out to be, among other groups, more closely related to each other both chronologically and typologically. The traceable chains of evolution of the north Semitic alphabets will be shown below. The chronological order is sometimes left unaccounted, though it is strictly kept in general. Mere chronological correctness is not always to be thought as scientific in studying the evolution of the Semitic alphabets. The Mendel's law of heredity holds good also here in our study; old, hereditary physiognomy of letter recurs in some way or other two, three or many generations later. In the study of palaeography, archaeology and chronology often have to give place to the lineal significance of the physiognomy of letter. Generally speaking, the original forms are developed through the following two stages, namely, cursive and, then, conventionalization.

$$1. \lambda \quad K(K) - \neq - \begin{cases} \neq - \& - \& - \times \\ \& - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \times - \times - \times - \times \\ - \times - (\lambda) - \} - 1 \\ \& - \sigma(\sigma) - \delta - / \end{array} \right. \\ \neq - \sim - \sim - \dots - \times \end{cases}$$

$$2. \gamma \quad \mathfrak{Y} - \mathfrak{Y} - \begin{cases} \mathfrak{Y} \\ \mathfrak{Y} - \supset - \neg - \neg - \neg \end{cases}$$

$$3. \lambda \quad 1 - \lambda - \lambda - \lambda - \begin{cases} \lambda - \lambda \\ \lambda - \lambda - \lambda - \lambda \\ \lambda - \dots - \lambda \end{cases}$$

$$4. \gamma \quad \Delta - \Delta - \Delta - \begin{cases} \mathfrak{q} \\ \mathfrak{Y} \\ \mathfrak{Y} - \neg - \neg - ? \end{cases}$$

$$5. \Pi \quad \Xi - \Xi - \Xi - \begin{cases} \lambda - \Pi - \Pi - \Pi \\ K(K) - (K) - \omega \\ \quad \quad \quad \omega - \alpha \\ \Pi - \Pi - \begin{cases} \& - \& \\ \delta - \delta - \delta \\ - \theta \end{cases} \end{cases}$$

$$6. \gamma \quad \Upsilon - \Upsilon - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \eta - \eta - o - o \\ \gamma - \eta - \eta - , \end{array} \right.$$

$$7. \uparrow \quad \text{I} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{I} - \text{I} - \sim - \sim - \sim - \uparrow \\ \text{I} - | - / - ; \end{array} \right.$$

$$8. \pi \quad \Theta(\mathbb{H}) \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \mathbb{H} \\ \mathbb{H} \end{array} \right\} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{H} - \Pi - \Pi - \Pi \\ \text{H} - (\mathcal{H}) - \mathcal{H} - \mathcal{H} \\ \text{H} - \mu - \mu - > - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} > \\ \leq - \mathcal{H} \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right.$$

$$9. \omega \quad \oplus - \otimes (\otimes) - \oplus - \oplus \dots \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \odot - \odot \\ \odot - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \odot - \odot \\ \mathcal{H} - \mathcal{H} \end{array} \right. \\ \odot - \odot \end{array} \right.$$

$$10. \text{' } \quad \exists - \text{' } - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \lambda - \sim - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \wedge - \text{' } \\ \gamma - \text{' } - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{' } \\ \text{' } \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right.$$

11. כ $\Psi - \Upsilon - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ך} - \text{ך} - \text{ך} - \text{כ} - \text{כ} \\ \text{ך} \\ \text{ך} - \text{כ} - \text{כ}, \text{ך} - \text{כ}, \text{כ} - \text{ך} \end{array} \right.$
12. ל $L - \text{ל} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ל} - \text{ל} - \text{ל} \\ \text{ל} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ל} - \text{ל} - \text{ל} \\ \text{ל} - \text{ל} \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right.$
13. מ $\xi, \zeta - \text{ז} - \text{ז} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ז} - \text{ז} \\ \text{ז} - \text{ז} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} (\text{ז}) - \text{ז} - \text{מ} \\ \text{ז} - \text{ז} - \text{ז} \\ \text{ז} - \text{ז} - \text{ז} \\ \text{ז} - \text{ז} - \text{ז} - \text{ז} \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right.$
14. נ $\text{נ} - \text{נ} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{נ} - \text{נ} - \text{נ} - \text{נ} \\ \text{נ} - \text{נ} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{נ} - \text{נ} - \text{נ} \\ \text{נ} - \text{נ} \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right.$
15. ס $\text{ס} - \text{ס} - \text{ס} - \text{ס} - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} (\text{ס}) - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ס} + \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ס} \\ \text{ס} \end{array} \right\} \\ \text{ס} \end{array} \right. \\ \text{ס}, \text{ס}, \text{ס} \end{array} \right.$

16. y $O - o - \diamond - \nabla - \cup - \vee - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} y \\ y - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \gamma - \gamma - \gamma \\ x - x \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right.$

17. ϑ $) - \int - \gamma - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \beta - \beta - \beta \\ \beta - \eta - \eta \\ \beta - \eta - \eta \end{array} \right.$

18. ξ $\sqcup - \sqcup - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \xi - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \eta \\ \eta \dots \eta \end{array} \right. \\ \eta - (\eta) - \xi \\ \rho - \rho - \rho - \infty \end{array} \right.$

19. p $\Phi - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \Phi, \Phi, \Phi - \Phi - \Phi - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \eta - \eta \\ \rho - \eta = \eta \\ \dots \rho \end{array} \right. \\ \Phi \end{array} \right.$

20. γ $\gamma - \gamma - \gamma - \gamma - \gamma - \gamma - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \gamma - \gamma - \gamma \\ \gamma - \gamma \end{array} \right.$

21. ω $W - W - \omega - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \omega - \omega - \omega - \omega \\ \omega, \omega - \omega \end{array} \right.$

22. η $+ - X - X - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \eta \\ \eta - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \eta - \eta - \eta - \eta - \eta - \eta \\ \eta - \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \eta - \eta - \eta - \eta \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right. \end{array} \right.$

CONCLUSION

Our whole discussion can be summed up in the following manner. The Pheonician alphabet having been established in Phoenicia, gradually passed through the various stages of its evolution. In the north Semitic alphabets all the branches are closely related to each other and so they can be traced from one branch to another by palaeographical links. The same cannot be said of the south Semitic alphabets. The manner of changing from one branch to the other is abrupt and artificial, and it is often hardly possible to tell which one has been derived from the other. . The gap between the Northern and the Southern groups has not as yet been bridged with any success. Their common origin, however, is too evident to be doubted. On the strength of various considerations, discussed in this paper, the south Semitic alphabet may have branched out from the proto-Phoenician alphabet. If the Phoenician alphabet had been obtained directly, or mediately under the influence of the Sinai alphabet, then, at the time of its origin it might have undergone certain modifications in its form. How it was done

still remains hidden from our sight. If there is any merit in the Cretan hypothesis the solution of the problem might be looked for in that direction. At all events, the Sinai script must never be minimized.

What has so far been looked for in Egypt is now earnestly sought in Sinai. The high date of the Sinai inscriptions (2000-1600 B.C.) is a weighty element in the search for an answer. If we did not have the inscriptions which we owe to the exploration by Petrie at Sinai, into what confusion we might have been thrown by the discovery of the cuneiform alphabet of Ras Shamra! Surely the pan-Babylonian arguers might have blown a trumpet blast of victory for a northern origin. At any rate, the high date of the Sinai script is noteworthy. If such a date is positively proved, it may be decisive against any other theories. Whether there has been an earlier prototype preceding the Sinai alphabet or not cannot be decided immediately. So far as the morphological considerations are concerned, the three script, the Sinai, south Semitic, and the Phoenician alphabets, stand in a triangle and not on a single line of sequence,

most primitive though the Sinai script appears. If these scripts can stand independently in a triangle, then, the highest date of the Sinai alphabet together with its primitive physiognomy may mean something. With the significance of this something can be associated Phoenicia which has been the distributing center of the Semitic alphabets both North and the South. From the view point of that early period, about 1600-1500 B.C., the whole course of development in the Near East can be seen in clear perspective.

*Their line is gone out throughout the earth,
And their words to the end of the world.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1 Mémoire sur l'origine égyptienne de l'alphabet phenicien,
Paris, 1874 E. de Rougé
- 2 Mélanges d'epigraphie et d'archéologie semitiques, 1874
J. Halévy
- 3 Histoire de l'écriture dans l'antiquité, Paris, 1891
Ph. Berger
- 4 Handbuch der nordsemitischen Epigraphik I, Weimar, 1898
M. Lidzbarski
- 5 " " " " II Tafeln
ibid.
- 6 Ephemeris für semitische Epigraphik I & II, 1903
ibid.
- 7 Die Entstehung des ältesten Schriftsystems, Leipzig, 1897
Fr. Delitzsch
- 8 Aufsätze und Abhandlungen, München 1892, 472ff.
Fr. Hommel
- 9 Ethnologie und Geographie des alten Orients, 96ff.
ibid.
- 10 Geschichte Israels, Leipzig, I 124ff. H. Winckler
- 11 Altorientalischen Forschungen III ibid.
- 12 Recent Theories of the Origin of the Alphabet:
Journal of the American Oriental Society 22, 1901, 177if
J. C. Peters

- 13 Über den Ursprung des Kanaanäischen Alphabets,
Berlin, 1906 Fr. Prætorius
- 14 Zum Ursprung des Alphabets: ZDMG 63, 1909, 858ff. *ibid.*
- 15 Das Kanaanäische und das südsemitische Alphabet:
ZDMG 63, 1909, 189ff. *ibid.*
- 16 A History of the Art of Writing, New York, 1920
Wm. A. Mason
- 17 Geschichte der Schrift, Kiel 1925 Hans Jensen
- 18 'Schrift in Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte, 1923
- 19 Encyclopaedia Britannica I, p. 677ff. (14th edit.)
- 20 Jewish Encyclopaedia I 449ff.

Cretan hypothesis

- 21 Scripta Minoa I, Oxford, 1906 A. J. Evans
- 22 Der Kretische Ursprung des "Phönikischen Alphabets,"
1913 Herm. Schneider
- 23 The Philistines, London, 1914 St. Macalister
- 24 Die Vokalsigkeit des "Phönizischen" Alphabets,
H. Schäfer

Sinai inscriptions

- 25 Researches in Sinai, London, 1906 Flinders Petrie
- 26 The formation of the Alphabet, 1912 *ibid.*
- 27 Inscriptions of Sinai, London, 1917 A. H. Gardiner

- 27 The Egyptian Origin of the Semitic Alphabet:
Journal of the Egyptian Archaeology III 1-6, 1916
A.H.Gardiner
- 29 Inscriptions Egyptiennes du Sinai, Paris 1904
R. Weil
- 30 P.E.F.Quarterly Statement, Jan. 1929, 48ff.
- 31 Über den Ursprung des Alphabets: Nachrichten von
der Kgl. Gesellschaft d. Wissenschaften zu Göttingen,
1916, 88ff. K. Sethe
- 32 Die neuentdeckte Sinai-Schrift und die Entstehung
der semitischen Schrift: Nachrichten von der Kgl.
Ges. d. Wissenschaft. z. Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Klasse
1917, 437ff. K. Sethe
- 33 Zur Entzifferung der neuentdeckte Sinaischrift,
Halle, 1918 Hans Bauer
- 34 Die Wissenschaftlichen Bedeutung der Petri'schen
Sinaifunde und die angeblichen Mosesgenisse:
ZDMG 80, 1926, 24ff. K. Sethe
- 35 Nachwort (zu H. Grimme, Hjatšepšu): ZDMG 80, 1926, 151ff.
ibid.
36. Althebräische Inschriften vom Sinai, Hannover, 1923
H. Grimme

- 37 The Egyptian Origin of the Semitic Alphabet:
Journal of Egypt. Arch. 3, 1916 R. H. Gardiner
- 38 Hjatsepsu und die Sinaischrift-denkmäler:
ZDMG 80, 1926, 137ff. H. Grimme
- 39 The Origin and Development of the Alphabet:
Amer. Jour. of Arch., July-Sept, 1927 B. L. Ullman
- 40 The Serabit Inscriptions: Harv. Theo. Rev., Apr. 1929
Charles Bruston
- 41 Die althebräischen Inschriften vom Sinai und
ihre historische Bedeutung, Leipzig 1924 D. Völter
- 42 The Serabit Inscriptions: Harv. Theo. Rev., vol. 21, 1929
R. F. Butin
- 43 The Sinaitic Inscriptions: The Jour. of Egypt. Arch.
Nov. 1929, p. 200-218 A. E. Cowley
- Inscriptions from Byblos
- 44 Les inscriptions phéniciennes du tombeau d'Ahiram,
roi de Byblos: Syria 5, 1924, 134ff. R. Dussaud
- 45 Les fouilles de Byblos: Revue Biblique, 34, 1925, 161ff.
H. Vincent
- 46 Dédicace d'une statue d'Osorkon I par Eliba'al,
roi de Byblos: Syria 6, 1925, 101ff. R. Dussaud

The Inscription of Ras Shamra

47 Un nouvel alphabet semitique: Revue Biblique 4,1930

R.P.P.Dhorme,

48 Entzifferung der Keilschrifttafeln von Ras Shamra,

Halle,1930 Hans Bauer

49 Première traduction des textes pheniciens

de Ras Shamra: Rev.Bibl. I,1931 R.P.P.Dhorme

Assyrian origin

50 Der Ursprung des altsemitischen Alphabets aus

der neuassyrischen Keilschrift,ZDMG xxxi,p.102-116

W.Deecke

51 Die Entstehung des ältesten Schriftsystems,1897;

ein Nachwort,1898; Proceed.of the Soc.of Bibl.Arch.

15,1893,p.392ff. Fr.Delitzsch

52 Ethnologie und Geographie des alten Orients,1925

Fr.Hommel

Mesa Inscription

53 Die Inschrift des Königs Mesa von Moab,Freiburg i.B

1886 R.Smend und A.Socin

54 Berichte über die Verhandlungen der K.Gesellschaft

der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig,1897,171ff.

A.Socin und Holzinger

55 Eine Nachprüfung der Mesainschrift, Ephem. für semit.

Epigraphik I, 1ff. M. Lidzbarski

Siloam inscription

56 Die Siloahinschrift: ZDMG 4, 1881, 102ff.; 5, 1882, 205ff.

E. Kautzsch

57 Die Siloahinschrift: ZDMG V. 4, 1881, 250ff.; ZDMG 36, 1882

725ff.

H. Guthe

Senjirli inscription

58 Mitteilungen aus der orientalischen Sammlungen

der K. Museen zu Berlin XI. Ausgrabungen in Sendscherli,

Berlin, 1893

South Semitic alphabet

59 Südsemitische Alphabete: M. Lidzbarski in Ephemericis

für semitische Epigraphik 2, 1903, 361.

Tablets and scripts

60 Lidzbarski (vide 4)

61 Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum (CIS)

62 Reallexikon der Vorgeschichte, Tafeln 109-111

63 Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th edit.: "Alphabet"

64 Das Buch der Schrift, Wien 1880

Karl Faulmann

65 Alphabete und Schriftzeichen des Morgen- und des

Abendlandes, 1924 Herausgegeben von der Reichsdruckerei

Add. Bibl. The Seal of Jaazaniah, Sonderabdruck aus der
Z. A. W., Zehnter Band - 1933 - Heft 2, Wm. F. Bade.

History

- 66 Prolegomena to the Philistine Problem, 1928
George Percy Hedley
- 67 A History of Egypt J.H. Breasted
- 68 Ancient Records of Egypt, 5 vols. ibid.
- 69 A History of the Ancient Egyptians ibid.
- 70 Egypt and Western Asia in the Light of Recent Discoveries
L.W. King
- 71 Cambridge Ancient History
- 72 Archaeology and the Bible G.A. Barton
- 73 Sketches from Eastern History, 1892 Theodor Nöldeke

Miscellaneous

- 74 Wörterbuch der Aegyptischen Sprache, 4 vols.
Erman-Grapow
- 75 The Palace of Minos at Knossos, 1923 A.J. Evans
- 76 Catalogue of Greek Coins (Palestine), London, 1914
C.F. Hill
- 77 Die griechischen Dialekte I S. 35, Tafel, S. 32
Otto Hoffmann
- 78 Sitzungsber. der Preussischen Akademie 1911, Tafel, S. 632
Richard Meister
- 79 Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften Hermann Collitz

80 Handbuch der griechischen Literatur Wilhelm Diefenbach

81 Harvard Excavations at Samaria, 1908-1910, 1924, I, p. 277.

Reisner, Fisher, Lyon

82 Handbuch der Altarabischen Altertumskunde, Copenhagen

1927, I Band Ditlef Nielsen

83 A History of the Arabs, 1930 Reynold A. Nicholson

84 Tagbuch einer Reise in inner-Arabien, Leiden, 1914

II Band. Julius Euting

Other authors

85 Über die Himjaritische Sprache und Schrift, Halle, 1841

Wili. Gesenius

86 Versuch über die Himjaritischen Schriftmonumente,

Halle, 1841 E. Rüdiger

87 Zur himjarischen Alterthums- und Sprachkunde,

ZDMG 10, 1866 Ernst Osiander

88 Sabäische Denkmäler, Wien, 1883 J. H. Mordtmann

89 Sabäische Inschriften, entdeckte und gesammelt von

siegfried Langer, ZDMG 37, 1883, S. 319-421 D. H. Müller

90 Yemen inscriptions, the Glasser Collection in

"The Babylonian and Oriental Record" 1887, vol. I.

Hartwig Derenbourg

91 Himjarische Inschriften und Altertümer in

"Königreiche Museen zu Berlin, Mittheilungen aus

den orientalischen Sammlung," Heft VII, Berlin, 1893

J. H. Mordtmann

- 92 Nordminäische und lihjanische Inschriften sind
herausgegeben von D.H.Müller: Epigraphische
Denkmäler aus Arabien, Wien 1889 (Sept. Abdr. aus dem
37 Bd. der Denkschr. der phil. hist. Classe der Wiener
Akademie)
- 93 Mission archéologique en Arabie II, Paris, 1914, p. ~~236~~-362.
Inscriptions mineennes Nr. 6-213.
Inscriptions lihyanites, p. 363-534 Nr. 35-384.

FOR REFERENCE

GTU Library



3 2400 00687 3040

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM

LIBRARY USE ONLY

